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Church history through all
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CHURCH HISTORY

THROUGH ALL AGES,

FROM THE FIRST PROMISE OF A SAVIOUR TO THE
YEAR MDCCCXXX;

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF THE PRINCIPAL MARTYRS AND
PROMOTERS OF CHRISTIANITY; AND RECORDS OF THE
MOST SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARY SOCIETIES, FOR
ADVANCING RELIGION AT HOME AND ABROAD;

DESIGNED ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PERSONS, FAMILIES,
AND SCHOOLS:

Dedicated to the DIRECTORS of the MISSIONARY SOCIETIES, and to the SUNDAY
SCHOOL TEACHERS, in Great Britain and America.

BY THOMAS TIMPSON,

*Author of a "Companion to the Bible;" and a "Father's
Reasons for Christianity."*

"I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—
Matt. xvi. 18.

"I am fully persuaded, that Christ's church is every where founded in every
place, where his gospel is truly preached and effectually followed."—*Bishop
Ridley in his Examination before his Martyrdom.*

"Logical arguments and controversial reasoning cannot be well adapted to
every understanding; and, therefore, are not always attended with the desired
effect, however skilfully arranged; but HISTORICAL FACTS lie level to the
meanest capacities, and the consequences thence deducible are, to the meanest
capacities, plain and obvious."—*Bower's "Lives of the Popes."*—*Preface.*

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TO THE
ZEALOUS DIRECTORS AND LIBERAL SUPPORTERS
OF THE VARIOUS SOCIETIES FORMED FOR
PROMOTING THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST THROUGHOUT THE
HABITABLE WORLD :
AND TO THE
DEVOTED TEACHERS OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS,
BOTH IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA,
THE NOBLEST PATRIOTS, THE MOST REFINED PHILANTHROPISTS,
AND THE BRIGHTEST ORNAMENTS OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST :—

This Brief Record
OF
“ CHURCH HISTORY THROUGH ALL AGES,”
DESIGNED TO EXHIBIT THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR LABOURS,
IS,
WITH PRAYERS FOR THEIR INCREASED SUCCESSES,
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED AND INSCRIBED,
BY THEIR FRIEND
AND FELLOW-SERVANT IN THE GOSPEL,
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THROUGH a period of many years, much time has been expended in collecting, arranging, and condensing the materials of this volume. The design of it professes to be to give a brief, but faithful representation of the “ Church of God through all Ages, from the first Promise of a Saviour,” down to our wondrous times.

Archbishop Secker has happily stated the principles upon which the Author has compiled this History. In his “ Lectures on the Church Catechism,” that judicious prelate says, “ The Catholic church is the universal church spread through the world ; and the Catholic faith is the universal faith ; that form of doctrine which the apostles delivered to the whole church, and it received. What that faith was we may learn from their writings, contained in the New Testament ; and, at so great a distance of time, we can learn it with certainty no where else. Every church or society of Christians, that preserves this Catholic or universal faith accompanied with

true charity, is a part of the Catholic or universal church. And in this sense, churches, that differ widely in several notions and customs, may, notwithstanding, each of them be truly catholic churches."

Peculiar solicitude has been cherished, to afford a correct exhibition of the true church of Christ, manifest in the numerous branches of it arising from the Protestant Reformation. The advancement of scriptural religion among the English Puritans and Nonconformists,—the colonization of North America, by those persecuted servants of God,—the prevalence of godliness in that amazing country,—the increase of piety among the Dissenters in Great Britain,—the origin and zealous labours of the Methodists,—the revival of religion in the church of England,—and the formation of the various Missionary and Bible Societies, supported by the different denominations of Christians in our day, are confessedly astonishing. They are diffusing innumerable Divine blessings among mankind; and they are, therefore, here presented to the admiration and delight of those who believe in the promises of God, thus affording additional assurance of the perfect accomplishment of all the predictions in His most Holy Word.

MESSIAH seems about to hasten the full manifestation of his glory, and the coming of his kingdom upon earth. "God, who cannot lie," has said, "Man shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call him blessed." Psal. lxxii. 17. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. xii. 4.

“Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of his times.” Isa. xxxiii. 6. “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the **Lord**, as the waters cover the sea.” Isa. xi. 9.

Assuredly believing these delightful declarations of Holy Writ, “Church History through all Ages” has been compiled from a great variety of sources. The Author has read most of the popular Ecclesiastical Histories in our own language, and some in several others; but he has neither seen nor heard of one, which he conceived adapted for youth of the present age; treating the subject comprehensively, candidly, and impartially. This he has attempted; and, in the judgment of several intelligent and judicious persons, he has, in a considerable measure, succeeded.

In judging of men, of customs, and of claims, the Author has regarded the inspired Word of God as his only, his infallible rule of decision. And in writing for the *young*, he has endeavoured sacredly to observe the sound maxim of the judicious Mrs. Hannah More. “It is undoubtedly our duty, while we are instilling principles into the tender mind, to take particular care that those principles be sound and just: that the religion we teach be the religion of the Bible, and not the invention of human error or superstition: that the principles we infuse into others, be such as we ourselves have well scrutinized, and not the result of our credulity or bigotry; nor the hereditary, unexamined prejudices of our own inexperienced childhood.”

That which has been found, among the different denominations of Christians, to agree with the oracular decisions of the Holy Scriptures, the Author has cordially commended; while human, unscriptural impositions he has freely censured or condemned: and though aware of many defects, he is not conscious of having written a single sentence in the spirit of party, or a line on which he cannot continue to implore the Divine benediction.

With humble confidence and earnest prayer, this volume is commended to **HIM**, the History of whose church it imperfectly details; that it may be instrumental in promoting the edification of the younger members of that holy fellowship on earth, in their pilgrimage to join “**THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORN WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.**”

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CHURCH HISTORY,

&c.

BOOK FIRST.

INTRODUCTION.

Importance of history—Ecclesiastical history—Church of God—Congregational church—Lord Bacon's definition of the catholic church.

HISTORY has, in all ages, been commended to the attention of youth. By the wise, it has universally been considered as a necessary branch of a sound education. The importance of this subject is admitted by every reflecting person, as it leads to the common storehouse of the experience of mankind. History gives a faithful picture of human nature, and introduces to our acquaintance generations of the illustrious dead, by recording their living actions, both in their virtues and faults. History exhibits to us the origin of societies, of opinions, and of customs; the rise and progress, the decline and destruction, of nations; and, while its various and tumultuous scenes pass before us successively in review, the devout believer is excited to rejoice in the prospect of his heavenly rest, to confess himself a “stranger and a pilgrim upon earth,” and to look for that “eternal city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

If general history be a study so edifying and useful, how much more so must be the history of the church of God! In this we behold the merciful interposition of the Deity, directed to the regeneration and salvation of an apostate world; and the several dispensations of his sovereign grace, for the

recovery of innumerable transgressors to a state of friendship with himself on earth, and of preparation for his heavenly kingdom. Ecclesiastical history unfolds to us the gracious operations of the Divine Government; presents to us the rarest examples of human excellence; and explains to us the immense and awful difference between the mere form of religion, and its vital and sanctifying power. As the various revolutions of the church of God on earth will be reviewed, under the Divine illumination, with wonder and delight in heaven, it powerfully claims the present study of pious men. This most interesting subject forms, indeed, a large portion of the inspired Volume, which our blessed Master has commanded us to search diligently, as the means of our sanctification and salvation. The Word of God is peculiarly an ecclesiastical history; being, as the expression signifies, a continued account of the church of God, and this, for a period of four thousand years. Ecclesiastical history is a record of the true worshippers of God, who have served him according to his revealed will: it is also sometimes, though not correctly, applied to accounts of false religions. Many have inquired, whether there have been true worshippers of God in every age of the world;—to which we may confidently affirm, in reply, that there have: for although, through the wickedness of mankind, the number of truly religious persons has sometimes been very small; yet God never left himself without witnesses of his being, perfections, and mercy, in the world. Through all ages, even the darkest, he has had a church to serve and glorify him upon the earth, anticipating his eternal friendship in immortality.

The signification of the expression, “Church of God,” seems to be greatly mistaken by many; even by some persons who, in general, are intelligent and well-informed: it will be proper, therefore, accurately to define it. Mistakes on this subject, with some sensible persons, arise from want of consideration; but in most instances, and in different countries, they appear to spring from early prejudices;—as they are accustomed to regard the “Church of England,” the “Church of Scotland,” the “Church of Rome,” or the “Lutheran Church,” as of the same import as the “Church of God.”

But this church cannot be limited to any single or national community. By the wisest Christian writers it is used to denote *all those, in every part of the world, who believe on Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinners, and who yield up their hearts to his authority and service.* In the Scriptures there are two significations; one *congregational*, and the other *universal*; both of great importance to be regarded by inquirers after truth; and which, because of their correctness, shall be given in the words of acknowledged respectability. A congregational church, according to the nineteenth Article of the Church of England, is as follows: “The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.” Every society answering this description is a true church, according to the New Testament, in what age or nation soever it may be found, or by whatsoever denomination it may be known. The definition of the universal church by Lord Bacon appears to be the best that has ever been given. He says, “There is a universal, catholic church of God, dispersed over the face of the earth, which is Christ’s spouse and Christ’s body; being gathered of the fathers of the old world, of the church of the Jews, of the spirits of the faithful dissolved, and the spirits of the faithful militant, and of the names yet to be born, which are already written in the book of life.” This definition marks the subject of this volume, which is intended to furnish a brief sketch of those things most remarkable in the history of the church of God.

CHAPTER I.

Successive dispensations of the divine mercy—Patriarchal—Animal sacrifices typical of Messiah—Martyrdom of Abel—Pious ministry of Seth—Translation of Enoch—Depravity of mankind—Deluge—Piety and preservation of Noah in the ark.

PURSUING the history of the church of God, it will be necessary to regard the three principal dispensations under which he has been pleased to reveal his will to his servants. Those

dispensations are denominated the *Patriarchal*, the *Levitical*, and the *Christian*. The former gradually prepared the way for the introduction of the gospel, by increasing discoveries of the merciful purposes of Jehovah towards mankind. We find, in the inspired Scriptures, the substance of his early revelations to his pious servants. The Lord God taught the patriarchs, that though the fall of Adam, and the transgressions of mankind, had exposed them to his righteous indignation, yet, in the last days, the Messiah should come, to destroy the works of the devil; and, by a sacrifice of atonement, obtain eternal redemption for repenting and believing sinners: thus the revealed mercy of God in Christ invited them to trust in his promises, for the blessings of salvation and life everlasting. To prefigure the sin-offering of the Messiah, and to instruct mankind in the nature of his offices as a Saviour, the animal sacrifices of atonement were offered by the divine appointment. That Adam and Eve became penitent worshippers of God, by faith in the promised Messiah, we have the greatest reason to conclude from the conversations of Jehovah with them, and from the pious instructions which they evidently imparted to their sons Abel and Seth. It is also clear, from the historical scriptures, that all those who truly feared God, in the patriarchal times, lived by faith on the promised Messiah; the discovery of whom, by the inspired tradition, was the foundation of hope to the ancient church: to many of its members, God gave peculiar intimations; as appears by the knowledge which was possessed by Abraham, Job, Jacob, Moses, and many others, concerning the character of the Redeemer.

The deep depravity of the human heart was soon awfully manifested in the shocking murder of Abel, by the hand of his own brother! The wickedness of Cain will appear with especial aggravations, if we consider the peculiar circumstances of them as brothers; and, that Abel was a religious young man, showing the fruits of his sincere piety by a life holy and inoffensive. Cain was not a believer in the Messiah: he was the first infidel; and, in his horrible fratricide, we behold the dreadful effects of infidelity, irreligion, and unsanctified passions. The characters and actions of these two brothers afford us instruction of the most profitable kind; and prove that,

from the beginning, the church of God has been persecuted by worldly men, who have always hated its religion. The apostle John, by divine inspiration, supplies us with the proper reflections which we should make upon reading this dreadful tragedy: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." It must have been a source of serious discouragement to men, in the worshipping of God, and the practice of virtue, to observe, that Cain, the murderer of his pious brother, was permitted to live; if, as some have absurdly supposed, the patriarchs had no knowledge of a future state of rewards and punishments. But the inspired Epistle to the Hebrews assures us, that the people of God were confidently persuaded of perfect happiness in a future life: that the earliest worshippers of God "all died in faith, having seen the promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth:—that they sought a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. xi. 13—15.)

Cain appears to have continued impenitent; an apostate from the religion of his father, and of his brother Abel; directing the employment of his numerous family in building cities, and carrying on their civil affairs. The population was immensely increased; and about the year of the world 200, there was a remarkable revival of religion among men. The inspired historian says, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." (Gen. iv. 26.) It was at this time first that men were stirred up to meet together in religious assemblies; and Seth, a son of Adam, about seventy-five years of age, and his son Enos, seem to have been the principal ministers in the divine service. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon them; and the manner in which they attended to the worship and ordinances of God, clearly evinced the divine design to preserve a separated church among men upon the earth.

At this period the church, probably, was small, and consisted but of few persons, compared with the whole population: yet the ministry of Seth and Enos was evidently blessed to the salvation of many; among whom was their celebrated

descendant, the prophet Enoch. The Scriptures represent Enoch as a person of uncommon sanctity, and an eminent preacher of righteousness. They do not furnish us with an extended account of his life and ministry; but a precious fragment of his prophecy has been preserved by Jude, in his Epistle. More correctly translated, it is read, "And Enoch, also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied against them, when he said, Behold, the Lord comes with myriads of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly among them of their impious works which they have impiously committed; and of all the hard things which impious sinners have spoken against him." It is evident that Enoch maintained a vigorous contest, with the numerous infidels of his time, concerning faith in the Messiah, obedience to God, and the institutions of public worship; the certainty of the divine vengeance on ungodly and persecuting sinners, and the everlasting recompense of the righteous. "Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." The singular grace of God was displayed toward Enoch, in his exemption from the common lot of sinning mortals. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Heb. xi. 5.) Publicly to approve and reward his holiness, and to render him a type of Christ in his ascension, and a pledge of the complete and eternal glorification of the saints, God took him out of this world to heaven, both soul and body. As to the manner of his translation, nothing is particularly mentioned in the Scriptures; but as he appears to have resembled Elijah, both in his character and ministry, we may reasonably suppose that his translation was effected by angels, appearing as a chariot of fire; and, also, like that of the Israelitish prophet, it was visible to many, especially to those who feared God. This wondrous fact was designed for the confirmation of their faith, and to encourage the faithful in bearing witness of it to the members of the church, and to the men of the world.

Enoch having been translated to glory, and Enos dying, the church seriously declined. Many of the professors of true religion marrying the elegant and beautiful daughters of

ungodly men, became worldly, irreligious, and abandoned in wickedness. The people of God were diminished in number; and the few were grievously oppressed by the violence of the "giants," who rioted in wickedness in those days. Iniquity prevailed universally: and "God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."—"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear" of the approaching deluge, and notwithstanding the manifold scoffs of his ungodly neighbours, "prepared an ark to the saving of his house." In this tremendous visitation of divine judgment, we behold "the goodness and severity of God:"—his goodness, in saving the man whom his own grace had qualified for that mercy; in saving the wicked part of Noah's family for the father's sake; and in giving the space of a hundred and twenty years, with the faithful ministry of Noah, as the means of repentance to the guilty profligates. The righteous severity of God we behold, in his overwhelming of the wicked, the despisers of his mercy, and the rejecters of the strivings of his gracious Spirit.

CHAPTER II.

The earth restored—Babel—Wickedness increased—Call of Abraham—Melchizedek—Job—Abraham's faith—Sacrifice of his son—Isaac—Jacob prophesies of Messiah—Patriarchal worship.

NOAH was released from the ark, the earth being restored. Immediately he builded an altar, and sacrificed to the God of his deliverance and salvation. Being offered in faith, "the Lord smelled a sweet savour" in these sacrifices of righteousness. To inspire the confidence of his people, he appointed the rainbow to be a token of the covenant of safety, for all generations to the end of the world. Again the earth was replenished with inhabitants: but wickedness abounded with the increase of men. Babel was partly erected; but its impious builders were confounded by Jehovah, and scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. Idolatry, with its profane absurdities, became almost universal: yet the church of God was continued in the family of pious Shem. To preserve his church

as witnesses of his being and providence, exhibiting monuments of his sovereign mercy, God called Abram from Chaldean idolatry, blessed him as his prophet, and honoured him to be the father of many nations. To this father of believers, the promises of the Messiah were renewed, with increased particularity and clearness; and rare examples of personal piety we behold in his illustrious descendants, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, heirs with him of the righteousness of God by faith.

But it is clear that the saving mercy of God was not limited to the father of the faithful and his family. Of this we have a most remarkable proof in the character of Melchizedek, a Canaanitish king of Salem, and priest of God; and, also, in the illustrious patriarch Job. This latter distinguished personage was an Idumean, or Arab prince; flourishing, as it is generally concluded, contemporary with Abraham, or a little later. Of Job, the Lord himself declared, that he was a "perfect and upright man," one who "feared God, and eschewed evil;" and that there was not "his like upon earth." The testimony of Jehovah to the sincere piety and universal integrity of Job, commends him to our highest admiration; while from his history we learn, that the spring of his obedience to God, and the efficacious principle of his moral excellence, were faith in the promised Messiah, his living Redeemer. It is probable, also, that there were others, besides him and his four friends, who, in those parts, truly feared God, and were his acceptable worshippers.

The character of Abraham has always excited the admiration of pious men: but many have frequently wondered at the offering up of Isaac by his own father! It has been often asked, "What could be the reason for Almighty God to command Abraham to sacrifice his son?" and, "Why did Isaac make no resistance, nor even offer an objection?" Bishop Hall observes, "All ages have stood amazed at this task of faith; not knowing whether they should more wonder at God's command, or Abraham's obedience." In reading the Scriptures, and in considering the works of providence, it should be remembered, that it is not necessary we should always perceive the reasons of the divine procedure. Many things of this kind are to be revealed to us in the church above. There

are, however, two reasons apparent, for that mysterious command of God: one is expressed in the inspired record by Moses,—to try the faith of Abraham. This patriarch was called of God to be an illustrious father of the church, and an eminent example of faith and obedience to believers in all ages and nations. But how could that have been the case, unless his trials had been singularly great? Such a heart-rending duty was never imposed upon any other father. On receiving the command, as Bishop Hall remarks, Abraham might have reasoned, “How can the righteous God delight in murder? How can I be such a monster, as to imbrue these hands in the blood of my own child? How can the murder of my obedient and affectionate son be an act of piety? What will the idolaters around me say to it? How can I avoid the abhorrence of all mankind? What will my beloved wife Sarah say? How shall I look his mother in the face? But even if I stifle the feelings of a father, and disregard what may be said by my neighbours, or my wife, how can Isaac be the father of a multitude of nations, and all people be blessed in him?” Such would have been the reflections of natural affection, but here is the grand reason of his unhesitating obedience, “Abraham believed in God.” “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son; of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” (Heb. xi. 17, 19.) The whole affair proves the extraordinary piety of both father and son: for Isaac, without difficulty, could have resisted all attempts upon his life, being grown to man’s estate, and, as is by many supposed, he was about thirty-three years of age.

The other reason for this command of God appears to have been, that Isaac might be a type of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We may safely conclude that it was designed by the God of Abraham, to instruct him in the way of our redemption, by giving his only-begotten Son, to be offered on the same mountain, a sacrifice for our sins. And that it was so understood by the patriarch, our Lord seems plainly to intimate, when, in reply to the Jews, he said, “Your father Abra-

ham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." (John viii. 56.) In the binding of Isaac, in the sacrificing of the ram, and in receiving Isaac as from the dead, he saw the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, in a lively figure.

The covenant of divine mercy in the Messiah was renewed to the patriarch Isaac, by the special appearance of Jehovah. Again it was confirmed to his son Jacob: the scriptural account of whose lives, and characters, and intercourse with the God of Abraham, afford to us much profitable instruction. Infinite Wisdom saw proper, and so ordained, that the church in the family of Jacob should go down into Egypt: at first to be preserved from the miseries of famine, and afterwards to endure a series of grievous sufferings. These were appointed, to prepare the people for the enjoyment of the promised land, and for the observance of the newly instituted ordinances of religion, which were to serve as a directory to lead them to Christ. Jacob, on his bed of sickness, pronounced his blessing upon his sons: and being inspired by the Holy Spirit, he delivered a remarkable prophecy respecting the circumstances of Judah, and the advent of the Messiah. Regarding the families of his twelve sons, as now constituting so many tribes, Israel said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. xlix. 10.) Agreeably to this prediction, Judah retained, not only its distinct tribal form, which every one of the rest successively lost, but a magistracy, or governing power, through all its revolutions, until Christ appeared in the flesh. And no sooner was the work of his mediation finished, than the gentiles were gathered to Shiloh by the preaching of the apostles,—the church being transferred to the Christian believers,—the Jewish infidel government being destroyed, and the remnant of the tribe being scattered as vagabonds, among all nations, the living witnesses of the truth of inspired prophecy, and of Christianity.

The way of worshipping God Almighty in patriarchal times, must have been venerably simple; and it seems exceedingly desirable to be particularly informed respecting it. The materials for satisfaction in this matter, could be furnished to us only by divine inspiration: but because it was not necessary,

either for our salvation or our peace, God has not been pleased to give them, either very full or precise. There is, however, sufficient in the Scriptures, to assure us that true religion is the same under each of the divine dispensations. The books of Genesis and Job, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, prove to us, that the patriarchs believed the same principal doctrines ;—cultivated the same heavenly tempers ;—were exercised with the same temptations, and cherished the same immortal hopes, as have distinguished the most eminent Christians. We learn that every pious father was priest in his own family, whom he called together at stated times to worship God by prayer and praise, and to seek the forgiveness of their sins by sacrifices of atonement, through which, as types, their faith was exercised upon Messiah, as the “ Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

Levitical dispensation—Israel in Egypt—Moses—Deliverance of Israel—Pass-over—Instituted ceremonies of worship typical of Christ—Pilgrimage in the wilderness—The will of God by tradition—First part of the Scripture written by Moses—Revival of religion among the Israelites—Declension of religion, and idolatry—Judges—Samuel—College of prophets.

THIS new dispensation of religion is called Levitical, on account of the tribe of Levi being divinely appointed to the services of the nation in sacred things. In this economy the merciful purposes of God towards mankind were more fully made known to the chosen posterity of Abraham, by the numerous ceremonies of religion, and by various successive revelations. Both in its constitution and history, there are many things which deserve our serious attention ; the knowledge of which constitutes a very necessary preparation for the correct understanding of the New Testament in many places, and of some peculiarities of the Christian system.

There are several particulars worthy of consideration during the life of Moses, under the Judges, and under the Kings.

Joseph died, and the children of Israel multiplied greatly in

Egypt, and became a numerous people ; but to keep down their power, and prevent their too great increase, various expedients were devised by the government. Their wicked devices were in vain : the God of Abraham blessed them, and preserved his church among them. An evil far more pernicious to the Israelites than oppression, was the prevailing idolatry of the Egyptians. Having been so long in the country, without the regular public ordinances of divine worship, and not being yet privileged with the written word of God, the Israelites were in danger of losing all sense of true religion ; and many actually fell away to the service of the idol gods of the land. But yet God did not suffer his church to be lost. True religion was still maintained by some, and the Lord had a people to serve him, even in the darkness of Egypt. Among these were the parents of Moses. It was by faith that they preserved their child, and “they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.” The singular circumstances of his childhood,—his adoption by the daughter of Pharaoh,—his education in all the learning of the Egyptians,—and his abandonment of the Egyptian court, were all directed by a special providence. The remarks of the inspired apostle upon the conduct of Moses, are strikingly instructive. “ By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter ; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt : for he had respect unto the recompense of reward.” (Heb. xi. 24—26.) As Moses was ordained to be so eminent an instrument in rescuing and establishing the church of God, we see the wisdom of divine providence displayed in every step of his early life. Connected with his future history, there are three things deserving to be considered :—his delivering the Israelites from Egyptian slavery ;—his significant institutions of religious worship ;—and his leading the people forty years in the wilderness.

All the circumstances attending their miraculous redemption from the house of bondage are wonderful. What destruction must have fallen upon the Egyptians, by a succession of plagues so dreadful as those inflicted upon them ; and especially by the

death of the first-born in every family, and afterwards by the total overthrow of Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea !

The tribes of Israel were redeemed from the oppression and idolatry of Egypt, by virtue of the blood of the paschal lamb ; and this was designed to be a type of our redemption by the precious blood of Christ. Hence the apostle says, “Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.” (Heb. xi. 24, 26.) The remembrance of their preservation from the destroying angel, was perpetuated and rendered instructive, by the annual observance of the passover ; which was continued, with some short intermissions, till the coming of Christ. At this ceremony, all the members of the family, and the slaves, being present, the youngest of the children, capable of speaking, was required to ask its meaning, when the master of the house recited the history of their redemption from the Egyptian oppressions.

The multiplied ceremonies appointed by Moses appear, to an irreligious mind, strange and unmeaning : but by many passages of the New Testament, and especially by the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is evident, that they conveyed a very important signification. It would be a profane reflection upon the wisdom of God, to suppose that he could ordain insignificant rites in his solemn worship. We may not, perhaps, be able to assign a perfect reason for every particular ceremony ; yet, the whole service was manifestly designed to teach three things : —the necessity of a Mediator between God and man ; signified by the office of the high-priest : —the necessity of an atonement for the sins of men ; signified by the daily, the annual, and the other sacrifices : —and the necessity of holiness of life, intimated by the various ceremonies of purification. The Epistle to the Hebrews confirms these points, with others highly instructive to us, in relation to our more simple Christian privileges.

It has often been asked, whether the spiritual signification of these ceremonies were understood by the Israelites ? To which it may be replied, though the rites of this institution were types of Jesus Christ, and of the bliss accompanying his gospel, yet it does not appear either evident or necessary, that any, even the most enlightened among the priests and prophets, should perceive their full import and application. Many

of the people were only formal worshippers, who considered nothing beyond the mere ceremony. But those who sincerely feared God, were of the true church, and certainly understood by them the necessity of a Mediator with God,—of the remission of sins through an atonement, and of a life distinguished by universal holiness. Many have wondered, what could be the reason of the Israelites continuing so long in the wilderness, supplied with food by miracle for forty years. To this it may be observed, it was principally to exhibit to the rising generation the wondrous grace and mercy of God; that they might be trained to serve the Lord in the promised land, after their idolatrous fathers had been buried in the desert. The reason is beautifully expressed by Moses, in the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy. But, besides, the design of God towards the Israelites themselves, their sojourning in the wilderness, and settlement in Canaan by Joshua, are intended as instructive emblems of the church of God, in their pilgrimage through this world, to the possession of heaven under Jesus, the Captain of their salvation.

In the first ages of the world, the church was taught the will of God, by his merciful revelations to the pious patriarchs, which were communicated by oral tradition from father to son. With inconceivable delight might Lamech, the father of Noah, hear from the lips of Adam, the story of his early life, the history of his first children, and the various revolutions of almost a thousand years. And with equal interest would Abraham hear from Shem, the son of Noah, the wondrous history of his salvation from the flood, and of the re-peopling of the earth; while he again delivered the record of God's grace to his descendants, Isaac and Jacob. As pious men, their minds would be chiefly interested in conversing upon the gradual discoveries of the Divine will, of the sacred visions, predictions, and types of future blessing, of the translation of Enoch, and of the deaths of the patriarchal saints. But now, in mercy to the church, while they were being educated in the wilderness, God gave to the Israelites, by the ministry of Moses, the first five Books of the Holy Scriptures, and the Book of Job. They must have been received as an invaluable treasure; containing, as they do, not only the institutes of

their ecclesiastical constitution, but a faithful summary of the former ages of the world, and the substance of the early traditions, pure from uncertainties and imperfections.

Among the children of the Israelites, who had been redeemed from Egypt, there was an eminent revival of religion. The inspired prophet says, "Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase." (Jer. ii. 3.) All the days of the venerable Joshua, and of the contemporary elders who outlived him, the Israelites observed, with exemplary care, the appointed worship of God. But we learn from the Book of Judges, that after their death, the princes and priests neglecting their duties, the people frequently relapsed into idolatry : on which account, God repeatedly gave them into the hands of their enemies, whose idolatries they embraced, and by whom they were grievously oppressed. Feeling their miseries, they returned with humiliation to the Lord their God, who raised up a succession of extraordinary judges for their deliverance. The prophet Samuel was the last of these distinguished men. The character of that holy man of God, both in early and in advanced life, must command the admiration of all who are capable of respecting eminent virtue. He was a father to the church, a zealous reformer, and an upright prophet among the people of Israel. But the sons of Samuel declined from the steps of their worthy father, they dishonoured his venerable name by their venality in the administration of justice, and the impatient people entreated Samuel to appoint them a king.

In the time of the judges, the number of prophets and eminent preachers of God's word was very few. "The word of the Lord was precious in those days : there was no open vision." (1 Sam. iii. 1.) To remedy this evil, and to preserve a succession of faithful ministers, Samuel founded a school for the education of pious young men, who in the Scriptures are called "prophets," "sons of the prophets," and "men of God." In after ages they were sometimes numerous, as in the days of Elijah and Elisha ; and such colleges continued, with more or less prosperity, to the age of Malachi, or even to the advent of Christ.

CHAPTER II.

Saul, the first king of Israel—David—Revival of religion in his reign—Solomon—Erection of the temple—Its dedication to God—Decline of religion—Idolatry and extravagance of Solomon—Revolt of the ten tribes—Idolatry set up in Israel—The worship of God in Judah—Corruption of religion in Judah—Jerusalem taken by Shishak, and its temple pillaged—Partial reformation in Judah—Israel more corrupt—Elijah—His translation—Elisha—Captivity of Israel, and destruction of their kingdom—Wickedness of Judah—Destruction of the temple, and captivity in Babylon—Prophets sent to both nations.

SAUL, the first king of Israel, appears to have been a neglecter of the worship of God ; and by his disobedience to the Divine command, and his horrible murder of eighty-five priests of the Lord, he must have done serious injury to the cause of religion. (1 Sam. xiii., xxii.)

David succeeded to the throne of Israel : he restored the ordinances of public worship ; for which he wrote many inspired psalms. His reformation was honoured of God : it was attended with a remarkable effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the power of religion was largely promoted among the people. David also prepared immense quantities of gold and silver, and other rich materials, for the purpose of building a magnificent temple to the honour of God ; but, by a divine message, he was directed by the prophet Nathan to leave it, to be carried into effect by his son Solomon.

It has been said, that Solomon's temple was the most splendidly finished building that was ever erected upon earth. And this is probably correct : for though some of the heathen temples and palaces might have far exceeded it in extent, it will seem not improbable, that none might be compared with it for elegance, costliness, and beauty. And this for two reasons : First, the prodigious quantities of gold, silver, precious stones, and other rich materials, which were prepared for it both by David and Solomon. (1 Chron. xxii., xxviii., xxix.) The other reason is,—the pattern and dimensions of every part of the building and its ornaments were given to David by inspiration of God, and the principal workmen were supernaturally endowed to perform their several parts of the work. Besides, this glorious temple is regarded as having been a type of the human nature of Jesus Christ, of the church of God, and of

the splendour of heaven. When finished, Solomon dedicated it to God by solemn prayer and sacrifice ; and the Lord expressed his approbation of it by the cloud of glory filling the house,—by sending down fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices,—and by appearing to Solomon in the night, assuring him that he had heard his prayer, and accepted the place as his peculiar house of sacrifice and blessing. (2 Chron. vii. 1, 3, 12.)

The temple having been dedicated to God, his worship was performed with the utmost magnificence, and the Jewish church attained its highest external glory. But if vital godliness increased in proportion to these splendid solemnities, it was afterwards in a greater degree injured by the foolish and shameful idolatries into which this wise king was led, in compliance with the baleful customs of his strange wives and concubines. The extravagancies of Solomon prepared the nation for an extensive revolt, and for the public establishment of idolatry, under the succeeding kings. The idolatrous excesses of Solomon compelled him to lay heavy taxes upon the people ; on which account, all the tribes, except Judah and Benjamin, withdrew their allegiance from his son Rehoboam, and set up Jeroboam as king over the ten tribes. The nation being thus divided into two kingdoms, the distinction arose, the “kingdom of Israel,” and the “kingdom of Judah.” As a matter of policy, Jeroboam set up two images, which the Scripture denominates “calves ;” one at the north, and the other at the south, end of his kingdom ; and commanded the people to worship before them ; lest, by going to the temple of God at Jerusalem, they should return in subjection to Rehoboam. With this grossly wicked procedure, all the people could not agree : the priests and Levites, and many who feared the Lord, out of all the tribes, flocked to Judah, on account of the ordinances and privileges of divine worship. Thus the kingdom of Judah became so increased, that it is probable it was nearly as large as that of Israel ; and the church of God was preserved within its limits.

It seems natural to suppose, that the apostacy of Israel would have been an efficient standing lesson of admonition to Judah ; and that the worship of God would have been sacredly

preserved at Jerusalem : but it is evident, that in Judah there was much more of the form of religion than of its power ; for after three years, when Rehoboam was established in his kingdom, he, and the nation generally, after his example, forsook the worship of God in his magnificent temple. They built themselves high places ; they planted groves for idolatry ; and committed all the abominations of the heathen, who had been destroyed from the land of Canaan. (1 Kings xiv. 21—24.)

How astonishing, that the favoured professors of true religion should so soon turn to the stupidity of idol-worship, and sink into the shocking corruptions of the Canaanites ! More especially may we wonder at the defection of Solomon himself, who had been so eminently distinguished by mental endowments, and with the repeated visions of God ! But “these things happened for our ensamples ;” and were designed to teach us, that the wisest and best of men may fall into sin and perdition, unless upheld by the power and grace of God our Saviour. Every page of the history of man exhibits, more or less, the depravity of his nature : but the Scriptures alone are impartial ; recording the wickedness even of good men, without any palliation or false colouring.

To punish Rehoboam for his apostacy, in the fifth year of his reign, the Lord permitted Shishak, king of Egypt, to invade the country, and to take Jerusalem, whose sumptuous temple he stripped of its riches, and plundered the king’s palaces of all their treasures. (1 Kings xiv. 22—26.) So short-lived was the external grandeur and glory of the Jewish church ! In this calamitous affair, we have a striking proof that Almighty God makes exceedingly little account of the ceremonial splendour of his worship, even that of his own appointing, when the devotion of the heart is wanting in his professed worshippers. The church was benefited by this afflictive visitation : for, in consequence of this calamity, Rehoboam and his princes hearkened to the word of the Lord, by the ministry of Shemaiah the prophet. They humbled themselves before the Lord, and promoted a reformation among the people ; so that the power of religion revived, and, for some time, “things went well in Judah.” (2 Chron. xii. 12.) But the practice of idolatry was still common in both king-

doms. During the continuance of the kingdom of Israel, among nineteen kings, they had not one pious sovereign: but in Judah there were several. Yet idolatry had taken such deep root, even among the Jews, that the evil could not be extirpated until they were carried captive to Babylon. The kingdom of the ten tribes was evidently sunk deeper in corruption than Judah: but still there were a few in Israel, living in obscurity, in those degenerate times, who truly feared God. To such a height had idolatry arisen in the days of Ahab, that, even after the execution of the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, and the public acknowledgment that Jehovah was the only true God, Elijah considered that there was not, in all Israel, any one besides himself that feared and served the Lord. But God assured him, there were yet "seven thousand men" whom he had preserved from forsaking his acceptable worship.

Elijah, having finished his extraordinary ministry, as Enoch under the former dispensation was exempted from the common lot of mortality, was taken up into heaven without dying, in the sight of his successor, Elisha, and fifty of the sons of the prophets. This, like the translation of Enoch, was designed as a further assurance to the godly, not only of a future state of felicity, but of the doctrine of the resurrection to a glorious immortality. Their number, notwithstanding, appeared to decline; while the whole people became still more corrupt, till their nation was lost in a final captivity, about seven hundred and twenty-one years before the advent of Christ.

As there were several pious kings of Judah, it might be expected they would endeavour to promote a reformation in the church. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, made vigorous efforts to restore the order of divine worship in all its departments; but the good which was effected by them was, in a serious measure, destroyed by the monstrous wickedness of Jehoram, Manasseh, Amon, and Jehoiakim. The last of these abandoned kings was put to death, according to the prediction of Jeremiah, (Jer. xxii. 18, 19, xxxvi. 30,) the temple and its service destroyed, and the people carried captive to Babylon, where they continued in affliction seventy years.

In illustration of the riches of divine grace, it must be

recorded, that Manasseh, being overcome in battle, and carried captive to Babylon, humbled himself in true repentance before the Lord. He obtained forgiveness of God;—he was brought back to Jerusalem, and the remaining years of his life were spent in endeavouring to restore the true worship of God, and to promote the interests of true religion, as in the days of his father Hezekiah.

In the abounding mercy of God, he sent many prophets, both to Israel and to Judah, to call them to repentance. To Israel he sent Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, and others; and to Judah he sent Joel, Amos, Isaiah, Nahum, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and others. Their messages and preaching were despised by the generality of the people, while their ministry was the most welcome and consolatory to those whose hearts were right with God. Their divine writings have been graciously preserved for our use, containing many of their discourses, and their ancient predictions concerning Jesus Christ, as the only promised Saviour of sinners.

CHAPTER III.

Benefit of the captivity in Babylon—Deliverance by Cyrus—Liberality of Cyrus to the Jews—Re-building of the temple and restoration of divine worship—Things wanting in the sacred temple—Labours of Ezra the priest, and Nehemiah the governor—Appointment of preachers—Collection and revision of the Scriptures—Completion of the Old Testament—Piety of Nehemiah—Of Simon the just—The great synagogue.

BABYLON was as a refining furnace to the Jewish church. The abominations of the Chaldeans, with their idolatries, and the sufferings which the Jews endured in that strange land, were the means of effectually destroying their rooted propensity to idolatry. Many of them bitterly lamenting their slavery, and acknowledging their iniquities, implored the divine compassion to appear in their deliverance from their deplorable condition. Some of their ardent prayers we read in the 74th, 79th, 89th, and 137th psalms.

From the first chapter of the book of Ezra, we learn, that the Jews were released from their captivity in Babylon, by the proclamation of Cyrus: but it has perplexed some persons to

understand, what could induce that conqueror to decree any thing in favour of an enslaved people ; and especially, in a manner so generous, to grant them their liberty. But it should be observed, that in this edict, Cyrus says, “ The **LORD** God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth ; and hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah :” by which it is evident, that he had seen the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah ; the former of whom mentions Cyrus by name, as the deliverer of the Jews. (*Ezra i. 1—4; Isa. xliv. 28; xlvi. 1—10.*) But as the Jews are known to have kept their sacred books secretly, and concealed from the Gentiles, it has been wondered how they could become known to Cyrus. Now it cannot be reasonably doubted, that they were shown to him by the prophet Daniel ; who, by the sovereign providence of God, was elevated to the dignity of prime minister to Nebuchadnezzar, and he filled the same office under Belshazzar. In this honourable, but dangerous situation, he continued after the conquest of Babylon, and prospered during the reigns of Darius and Cyrus ; being mercifully preserved, a bright example of the most inflexible integrity, and eminently devoted to the service of the true God. Although permission was granted to every Jew to leave Babylon, they did not all return to the land of their fathers : only such whose hearts were stirred up by the fear of the Lord, to the number of forty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty ; and their servants, to the number of seven thousand, three hundred, and thirty-seven. These returned immediately, under the conduct of Zerubbabel their prince, and Joshua, the high priest. It may be certain, that permission to return to their own country, especially to rebuild the sanctuary of God, and restore his holy worship, would be greatly prized by the pious captives : but the decree of Cyrus contained other things in their favour. By the marvellous providence of God, Cyrus freely restored all the rich gold and silver vessels, which had been pillaged from the former temple, by Nebuchadnezzar. And, in addition, he issued his commands to the inhabitants of every place, among whom the Jews dwelt, and to the governors of the adjacent provinces, to furnish them with

wood and stone, and all necessary provision for their return, and for their great work in re-building the temple.

Immediately on their return to Jerusalem, the Jews first made arrangements to restore the appointed worship of God, by building the altar of burnt-offering for the daily sacrifice; and then proceeded with preparations for the temple, whose foundation they laid early in the second year.

It will be recollectcd, by many of our readers, that Solomon's temple was finished in seven years: but this was much longer in building. They were greatly hindered by the vexatious enmity of the Samaritan governors: but God sent the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, to encourage them in their work, which was at length completed, and the temple dedicated, about twenty-one years after the foundation was laid. The city and its walls were not built till several years afterwards, under the direction of Nehemiah. From contrasting the fewness and the poverty of the liberated captives, with the wealth and numbers of the Israelites in the prosperous reign of Solomon, it may be well supposed, that this second temple was beyond all comparison, less splendid than the first; and such, in fact, was the case: for though its magnitude was probably equal, or, as some suppose, greater, its appearance was far less magnificent; and, in reality, those things which constituted the principal glory of the former temple, and of the church itself, could not possibly be recovered by human power and skill. The Jews reckoned five things, which were not restored in the second temple; and which were as follows: First, the ark of the covenant, whose lid of gold formed the mercy-seat, with the cherubim of glory overshadowing it, together with the several things which it contained. Second, the Schechinah, which was the Divine Presence, in a cloud of glory resting between the wings of the cherubim on the mercy-seat. Third, the Urim and Thummim; by which the high priest consulted God in national difficulties. Fourth, the holy fire, which came down from heaven upon the altar, at the consecration of the first temple. Fifth, the spirit of prophecy. These things belonging to the former temple, rendered it, indeed, far more glorious than all the grandeur produced by Solomon's

skilful workmen, and by his immense riches ; but God may be acceptably served without such extraordinary magnificence.

The pious reader will be more concerned to know, whether the purity of divine worship was restored, when the second temple was finished. For the promotion of this object, after the dedication of the temple, God raised up Ezra, an eminently pious priest, who was well instructed in the Scriptures ; and Nehemiah, an upright and prudent governor ; both of whom laboured to restore the purity of the religious services, and to promote the spiritual and general welfare of the church. The special services which Ezra performed among the people are worthy of being recorded. After proclaiming a fast, and collecting the people together, he publicly read to them the law of Moses, and he appointed it to be expounded to them, when they should assemble for worship, in synagogues built for that purpose in every town. From the time of Moses, many important additions had been made to the volume of the inspired Scriptures. Joshua completed the book of Deuteronomy, by writing the last chapter, and most of the book which bears his name, was written by him. Samuel finished it, and wrote the books of Judges, Ruth, and the first book which bears his name. The second book of Samuel is generally supposed to have been written by the prophets Nathan and Gad ; and the books of the Kings were compiled from the national registers, and set in order by Ezra. The Psalms were written mostly by David ; and they have been ever considered as a divine treasure to the church. The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, were written by Solomon, and the several books of the prophets, with those of Ezra, and Nehemiah, by those whose names they bear.

At the time of the reformation, Ezra collected among the people the copies of the several books of the Scriptures : these he corrected, and formed them into a volume. The sacred canon being afterwards completed, under the direction of the Great Synagogue, numerous copies were taken, by licensed scribes, for general use among the people. The Great Synagogue was the assembly of elders, under the direction of Ezra : they were one hundred and twenty in number, in a continued succession, from the return of the Jews from Babylon,

to the time of Simon the Just, who was the last of them. They perfected the canon of the Old Testament, by adding the two books of Chronicles, those of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi.

Every reader must admire the amiable character of Nehemiah, under whose wise and generous superintendence the city of Jerusalem was rebuilt, and its public offices were reformed. He must have been a powerful support to Ezra, in his labours for the welfare of the church; and their united services had a corresponding influence upon the people. The revival of religion, however, under these eminent men, was not of very long continuance, as appears from the book of the prophet Malachi. With him the spirit of prophecy departed from the Jewish church; and, after the decease of Simon the Just, which was two hundred and forty-four years after the captivity, and two hundred and ninety-two years before the advent of Christ, is acknowledged, that there was no visible manifestation of the Divine approbation of any at their religious services. The extraordinary character of Simon the Just, as given in the fifteenth chapter of Ecclesiasticus, and the services he performed for the welfare of the church, make us unwilling to leave the society of such men as he, and Ezra, and Nehemiah; especially as the power of godliness among the people, after the decease of these great men, was very inconsiderable, and declining until the manifestation of the Son of God.

CHAPTER IV.

Miserable state of the church—Maccabees—Martyrdom of the seven brethren and their mother—Jewish sects—Samaritans—Sadducees—Pharisees—Essenes.

The remainder of the Jewish history, except the reformation under the Maccabees, presents to us an appalling spectacle, in a succession of oppressions, captivities, and miseries, to which this people were subjected by the ambitious rulers of the surrounding nations. On account of their wickedness, Providence ordained them to feel the tyranny of Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and Rome; to which last nation, Judea was

reduced, as one of their provinces about fifty years before the advent of Christ. Doubtless there were many pious persons, mourning in private; but the church, as a body, was fallen exceedingly low. The form of godliness was generally retained; but vital religion continued to decline; while the greatest abominations and enormities were practised, both by the priests, and by the several sects into which the people were divided.

The Maccabees were those zealous persons who joined the ranks of Judas, surnamed Maccabeus, from the motto which he wrote upon his standard.* He was one of the five sons of Mattathias, a pious priest, who took up arms against their oppressor, Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria; because he endeavoured to destroy the worship of God, and to compel the Jews to observe the abominations of the idolatrous pagans. The strength of the Maccabees was very inconsiderable, when compared with the forces of Antiochus: but by their pious valour, they repeatedly defeated his generals with their large armies: they recovered the city of Jerusalem, and restored the worship of God at the temple, after it had been interrupted for three years. Many interesting particulars of the Jewish history, at this period, may be read in the books of Macca-bees; in which we find recorded the extraordinary instance of pious fortitude, in the terrible martyrdom of seven brethren with their mother, by order of the brutal Antiochus. It seems impossible to read that affecting narrative without astonishment and admiration at their courage and confidence in God, in the assurance of a joyful resurrection.

On restoring the Jewish church after the Babylonish captivity, there arose two parties among those who maintained regard for religion: one adhered to the Scriptures only, rejecting all human traditions: they professed to observe the whole law, and assumed the name of Zadikim, that is, the righteous. From these proceeded the Samaritans, and the Sadducees. The other party, over and above the inspired Scriptures, super-

* The motto of his standard was the first letters of that Hebrew sentence, Exodus xv. 11, *Mi Camoka Baclim Jehovah*: that is, "Who is like to thee among the gods, O Lord? Which letters were formed into the artificial word Maccabi, and all that fought under the standard were called Macca-bees."—*Dr. Watts's View of Scripture History.*

added the tradition of the elders; and from a supposed superior degree of sanctity, were called Chasidim, that is, the pious. From these proceeded the Pharisees and Essenes.

The Samaritans were originally the idolatrous successors of the ten tribes, whom the king of Assyria sent to re-people Samaria and the land of Israel. These, at first, as a punishment for their idolatry, were plagued with lions; which being reported to the monarch, a priest was sent to instruct them in the law of God. The sacred historian observes, “So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them, priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places, and served their own gods after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.” (2 Kings xvii. 24—34.) Afterwards they became reformed; they abolished idolatry, and worshipped only the God of Israel. From the instructive conversation of our Saviour with the Samaritan woman, we may gain some short, general hints concerning their religious principles; and by which it appears that even the more corrupt class had some knowledge of the Messiah, and an expectation of his appearance. (John iv.)

The Sadducees, as we learn from the New Testament, were opposed to the Pharisees on several points of doctrine. They were a kind of Deists. They received their peculiar appellation from Sadoc, their founder. At first they rejected only the traditions of the elders, as being destitute of any divine authority: but afterwards they adopted many of the impious notions of Epicurus, a heathen philosopher, and rejected the whole Scriptures, except the five books of Moses. They denied the resurrection of the dead, the existence of angels, and of the souls of men after death. They admitted that Almighty God made the world, and that he continues to govern it by his providence; but they believed there will be no rewards or punishments in a future state. Josephus, the Jewish historian, observes, that “whenever they sat in judgment upon criminals, they always were for the severest sentence against them.” He also says, “their number was the fewest of all the sects of the Jews, but they were only those of the best quality, and of the greatest riches among them.”

The Pharisees were the principal sect among the Jews; and though they were superstitious separatists from the common people, the vulgar entertained such an opinion of their sanctity, that it became a common notion among them, that if only two persons went to heaven, one must be a Pharisee. The greater part of the doctors of the law and of the scribes were of their party. They esteemed the traditions of the wise men, as of nearly equal authority with the Word of God, and generally gave them the preference! They were intolerably proud of their religious attainments; supposing themselves meriting the Divine favour by their duties and observances, and holding the illiterate multitude in the most absolute contempt. On these accounts, they were justly characterized by our Lord as grossly hypocritical, and at a greater distance from the kingdom of God than even publicans and harlots.

The Essenes were another sect of the Jews, of which, indeed, many never heard. Though our Saviour often censured the other sects, and the different classes of pretenders to religion, we have no account of his mentioning them specifically; nor are they noticed by the writers of the New Testament.

These people were the most rigorous in their religious observances, and the most singular in their ordinary manners of life. They appear to have been Pharisees originally; but they entered upon a more mortified way of living; and they probably were much more unblamable and free from hypocrisy. They believed in a future state of happiness and misery, but did not acknowledge the resurrection of the body. Some of them wholly disallowed marriage, and adopted the children of poor persons, to train them up in all their institutions. If any one desired to enter their society, he was received with great caution: they required him to remain on probation for three years, and, when fully admitted, to bind himself to worship and serve God; to do that which is just towards men; to conceal none of their mysteries from any of their society, and to communicate them to no others,—even to save their lives. They despised riches, and gave up all their property to the common stock. They were extremely abstemious in their food, which they ate at a public table; and they never changed their clothes

nor shoes till they were worn out, and unfit for use. If it be inquired, why we read nothing of this singular people in the gospel history, it may be replied, The New Testament says nothing concerning them, because they lived in the country, and were never seen in the temple at Jerusalem, so as to attract the notice of our Saviour: or, because they were plain people without hypocrisy, they did not deserve censure. But some suppose they were censured by our Lord under the general name of Pharisees, in whose superstitious regard to the traditions of men they were nearly agreed.

CHAPTER V.

Low condition of the church—Some eminently pious persons waiting for the Messiah—General expectation of the Messiah—Translation of the Scriptures into Greek—Reflections upon that important work.

IT may be difficult, or even impossible, at this time, for the most discriminating of men, to point to the true church of God in any particular body. Some have imagined, that piety flourished in the greatest degree among the self-denying Essenes, as “genuine godliness is fond of secrecy: humility is of its essence: she seeks not the praise of men, but the praise of God; and hides even the good she does, from the world, more studiously than wickedness conceals its evils: her sincerest votaries have, likewise, been chiefly private persons, such as have seldom moved in public and noisy spheres of life.” But we have the most satisfactory reasons to believe, that in the darkest times there were many among the mass, such as the prophet Malachi describes, when he says, “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.” These were such as the martyrs, in the time of the Maccabees; who, rather than sin, “were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.” At the time of our Saviour’s birth, though the people were generally corrupt, there were, perhaps, not a few; as we read of the parents of the Baptist, Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth, with her cousin Mary, “righteous before God,

and walking in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless." There were Joseph, the husband of Mary, "a just man," the "devout Simeon, waiting for the consolation of Israel," the aged prophetess Anna, and others in Jerusalem, well known to her, who were "looking for redemption in Israel."

There appears to have been in the minds of both Jews and Samaritans, and especially of those who truly feared God, an anxious expectation of the Messiah at the time of his appearance: and this expectation prevailed in all the surrounding heathen nations. That this should have been the case with the Jews, who possessed the predictions of that event, recorded in their divine Scriptures, cannot be matter of wonder: but it may naturally be inquired, how the same expectations could be excited in the minds of the heathen. It is well known to all intelligent persons, that the expectation of some great personage from heaven was, about that time, very general in the heathen world. This was occasioned by the faith of the patriarchs concerning the Messiah being traditionally conveyed to the eastern nations; from which Balaam, the Mesopotamian, spoke of the "Star of Jacob," and the "Sceptre of Israel," which denoted the Messiah. (Num. xxiv. 17.) It is also to be remembered, that the Jews had been scattered into many different nations, in which the inquisitive would soon learn their singular opinions and anticipations, in relation to the Messiah. But when we reflect upon the translation of the Scriptures into the Greek language, nearly three hundred years before the advent of Christ; and that a copy of this translation was placed in the public library of Egypt, for the use of learned men, besides its constant use in the synagogues, in the Jewish public worship, we shall have a satisfactory answer to such an inquiry. The translation of the Old Testament into the Greek language, ought to be regarded as an instance of the special providence of God, for the good of his church: and, perhaps, there is not an event, in the history of this dispensation, of so great interest to us; as it was the first general step towards bringing to the Gentiles the true knowledge of the character of God, and of his merciful purposes for the salvation of sinners.

The reason of this translation being made is commonly

said to have been, the desire of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt; that by the laws of Moses he might enrich the royal library at Alexandria. Several wonderful accounts have been given to us of the manner in which it was said to have been made, by the seventy-two Jewish interpreters, from the number of whom it is called the Septuagint. But as these stories rest upon very dubious evidence, they are concluded to be fabulous. The true reason, according to the most learned men, was, the dispersion of the Jews among the nations using the Greek language; by intercourse with whom, they forgot their native tongue, and were unable to read the Scriptures, or understand them, in the original Hebrew. This affair appears to have been an important link in the chain of divine providence in favour of the church, and it may be necessary to state a few more particulars concerning its progressive history. "Alexander the Great, on building Alexandria, brought there various colonies to people his new city; among whom were a great many Jews. To these he granted the free use of their own laws and religion. His successor, Ptolemy Soter, having fixed the seat of his empire in that city, brought there many more of this nation to increase the strength of the place; and having granted them the same privileges with the Macedonians and other Greeks, they soon grew to be a great part of the population. Intercourse with the Greeks necessitated them to learn their language, by which they forgot their own, as before at Babylon they had forgotten it, and had learned the Chaldee. This rendered it necessary to have the Scriptures translated for their use, which at first was limited to the five books of Moses, as the law only was read in their synagogue: but afterwards, when the prophetic books came into use in the public worship, they also were translated."* By this means, therefore, it was, that wherever the apostles went preaching the gospel, they found the Scriptures in the Jewish synagogues, which were in the Grecian cities, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles. A pious historian observes upon this transaction, "In this manner did God prepare the way for the preaching of the

* Prideaux's Connection, Vol. III., 73, 74.

gospel, which was then approaching, and facilitate the union of so many nations of different languages and manners into one society, and the same worship and doctrines, by the instrumentality of the finest, most copious, and correct language that was ever spoken in the world, and which became common to all the countries that were conquered by Alexander.”*

BOOK THIRD.

CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

CHAPTER I.

Condition of the world at our Saviour's advent—Roman empire included all civilized nations—Jews and Gentiles sunk in ignorance, superstition, and depravity—Heathens expect a great messenger from God.

ALREADY have we traced the progress of the true church of God through many painful and humiliating vicissitudes, under the first two dispensations of divine grace to man. In these we have seen the rich forbearance and long-suffering compassion of a righteous Creator, illustrated and confirmed, on repeated occasions, and in various ways. Christianity will lead us to contemplate the grand displays of the sovereign mercy of God, in the incarnation of his Son, for the redemption of a guilty world; breaking down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and constituting a new state, a universal community, a spiritual family, to embrace all the nations of mankind.

It will be necessary for us to take a brief review of the condition of the world at the time of our Saviour's advent; as this will lead us to perceive more clearly our need of such a deliverer as the Son of God, manifested in the flesh; and at the same time, the divine wisdom, in sending him at the memorable period in which he appeared. The political

* Rollin's Ancient History. Book XV., Article ii., Section 2.

state of the world was truly remarkable. The Roman empire had then attained its highest elevation of glory; and had brought under its dominion all the civilized parts of the earth. By this means, many nations, different in their language and institutions, were united in social intercourse, and a passage was opened to remote countries, by the communications which were necessary between the imperial capital and the tributary provinces. The Romans having conquered the Grecian states, seized their treasures of celebrated learning, prized their elegant writings, and cultivated their refined language: so that all persons of education became familiar with the Greek tongue, and were thus prepared to read the sacred writings, which had been already translated into that language.

As to the condition of the world, with respect to morals and religion, it was the most truly deplorable. All nations lived in the practice of the grossest superstitions, idolatries, and wickedness. They had not entirely lost all notion of one Supreme Being; yet the popular religious worship discovered the most manifest abuse of reason, with the greatest extravagance and absurdity. Their systems of false religion had a corresponding influence upon the morals of the people. The gods and goddesses, to whom divine adoration was paid, were deified men and women; celebrated as examples of every shocking and enormous vice! The natural consequences of such wretched theology, were a universal corruption of manners, and the shameless commission of crimes the most horrible. This state of things is testified by the best heathen writers themselves; but the most faithful account, contained in a few passages, is given to us by the authority of divine inspiration, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. If it be inquired, whether there were not some among the wiser heathen who could perceive the senselessness of such follies under the name of religion, and the evil of such abominations, and who laboured to promote a reformation; it may be said in reply, that in Greece and Rome, learning had attained its highest point of cultivation; but it was not generally diffused among the people. The partial attempts at reformation, made by the philosophers, were few

and feeble : the remedies, which they applied, were not adapted to cure the evil, or designed for the benefit of the poor ; and they were scarcely any better than the dreadful disease. The most eminent among them were unable, either to declare to the people with confidence, or even for themselves to discover, the true character of God, or the reasons and rules of public worship. They could direct to no atonement for human transgressions, by which the guilty might hope for pardon ; they were unable to prescribe any method of renovating the heart ; and, being altogether uncertain of a future life, they had no means of engaging mankind, by sufficient motives, to the study and practice of virtue.

Reflecting upon the miserable state of the world at the time of our Lord's appearance, we shall not only be convinced of the necessity of such a Saviour as Jesus Christ, but be led to adore a merciful God for such a display of his sovereign goodness, in bringing "life and immortality to light by the gospel." None but a class of miserable and impious creatures can treat with contempt, or even with neglect, the doctrines of the Son of God ; for to his benevolent and divine religion we are principally indebted for all the temporal advantages which we enjoy as a nation, for the true knowledge of the character of our Creator, as well as for all our blessed hopes of a future and eternal world of bliss.

We now see a peculiar beauty in that passage of the apostle Paul, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) Attention to circumstances, indeed, will prepare us to perceive many beauties of the Scriptures which are lost to superficial readers. The season in which our Lord appeared was, indeed, "the fulness of the time ;" whether we regard it as the fixed limitation of ancient prophecy, or look at the moral and spiritual condition of mankind. The fear of God was almost lost from the earth : for although the Jews possessed the oracles of God, their meaning was very much explained away by wicked misinterpretations, grounded upon the traditions of men ; and the morals of the Jews were scarcely to be distinguished from those of the licen-

tious heathen. Besides, “a short time before the birth of Christ, not only the Jews, but Romans, on the authority of the Sibylline books, and the decision of the sacred college of Etrurian augurs, were all of opinion, that this momentous event was at hand. This was equally the case in the East. At that time the emperor of India, uneasy at these prophecies, which, he conceived, portended his ruin and the loss of his empire, sent emissaries to inquire whether such a child were really born, in order to destroy him: and this happened in the three thousand one hundred and first year of the Cali-yuga, which is the first year of the Christian era. This traditional account is known all over India, and is equally current among the learned and the ignorant.”*

CHAPTER II.

Early history of John and of Christ—John the herald of Christ—Success of their ministry—Twelve apostles—Seventy preachers besides—Mistaken notions concerning the office of the Messiah as held by the apostles at first—Death and resurrection of Christ—Extraordinary gifts of the Spirit to qualify the apostles for their work—Thousands converted to Christ in a few days, by the preaching of the apostles at Jerusalem.

RESTLESS inquisitiveness has led many to desire more information concerning the early life of Christ, than Divine Wisdom saw necessary for our edification. Sufficient is contained in the writings of the evangelists, to assure us, that the ancient prophecies have been fulfilled in him: that he was the Seed of the woman by a miraculous birth; of the family of David according to the flesh; and that “he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” Having this assurance, our edification will be promoted, chiefly by contemplating his public life and ministry, as the only Mediator between God and man. The entire history of his labours and miracles, sufferings and resurrection, proves his divine mission, as foretold by the inspired prophets.

The extraordinary character of John, the forerunner and herald of Christ, leads us to suppose, that his ministry must

* Dr. Collyer's Lectures on Scripture Comparisons, p. 95.

have been very effectual among his countrymen : for we read that even the hardened conscience of Herod was awakened by means of his preaching. As John was sent “to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God,” he could not labour in vain ; and many, who were converted by his ministry, became afterwards the disciples of his Divine Lord. The wisdom of our Saviour appeared benevolently conspicuous, in appointing to the apostleship, from the number of his followers, twelve, in reference to the twelve tribes of Israel ; and seventy others, answering to the number of the senators in the Jewish sanhedrim, and in sending these through the whole country, to preach the gospel, and confirming their mission by miracles of mercy. It seems evident that their ministry, also, was attended with considerable success ; although we have no formal account of the numbers converted by their preaching, nor yet even by the personal ministry of Jesus Christ.

It is not the design of God to let his most successful servants always know the extent of their usefulness in the conversion of sinners. Many are converted, and sanctified, and glorified, whose names or numbers are never known to the church on earth. It is not to be doubted, that many were truly converted to God by the ministry of the preachers appointed by our Saviour, and by his own most wise and powerful discourses. We are not to limit the number of converts to the one hundred and twenty, whose names were enrolled as the first Christian church at Jerusalem ; nor even to those concerning whom the apostle Paul declares, that our Lord was seen, after his resurrection, “by above five hundred brethren at once.” (Acts i. 15 ; 1 Cor. xv. 6.)

The expectations of the apostles were grievously disappointed, when their Master informed them that he should shortly be put to death by the rulers of the nation : but their disappointment was perfectly natural, considering the groundless hopes which they had entertained, arising from their false notions and early prejudices. The Saviour whom the Jewish people expected, was not such a one as their prophets had foretold : but a worldly deliverer, who should release them from subjection to the Roman government, and restore their nation

to its former splendour in the reign of Solomon : one who should exalt them to dominion over the Gentile kingdoms, as tributary subjects, and enable them to trample upon all their enemies. It was long before these extravagant ideas were wholly eradicated from the minds of the apostles ; and when their Lord plainly told them that his kingdom and salvation were spiritual, and that the design of his coming was to give his life a ransom for many, they did not understand his meaning ; and for that reason they were exceedingly sorrowful. At length the awful hour of his death arrived,—that hour in which all the momentous events of divine providence were suspended,—the hour in which the Son of God was glorified, atoning for the sins of a lost world, and accomplishing our eternal redemption. The mistaken opinion of the apostles respecting a worldly kingdom for the Messiah, will account for the disciples' proposing that question to our Saviour, when they were assembled together after his resurrection,—“ Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? ” (Acts i. 6.) All these carnal notions were utterly dissipated when the Saviour’s answer had been realized by them : “ And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts i. 7, 8.)

We never think upon the Apostles of Christ, but with wonder and admiration : especially when we consider their character in early life, and even until the day of Pentecost ; and contrast it with what it was after that memorable festival. They were holy men after their conversion, and their characters were evidently improved from the time of the Saviour’s ascension : but as he gave them a command to preach the gospel to all nations, the gift of tongues was the most suitable endowment, which could be granted to them, being destitute of all human advantages, arising from learning or property, credit or friends. The learned ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, well observes,* “ The consequences of this grand

event were surprising and glorious, infinitely honourable to the Christian religion, and the divine mission of its triumphant Author. For, no sooner had the apostles received this precious gift, this celestial guide, than their ignorance was turned into light, their doubts into certainty, their fears into a firm and invincible fortitude, and their former backwardness into an ardent and inextinguishable zeal, which led them to undertake their sacred office with the utmost intrepidity and alacrity of mind. These holy apostles were filled with a persuasion, founded upon Christ's express promise, that the Divine Presence would perpetually accompany them, and show itself by miraculous interpositions, as often as the success of their ministry should render this necessary."

" What gifts, what miracles, he gave !
And power to kill, and power to save !
Furnish'd their tongues with wondrous words,
Instead of shields, and spears, and swords.
Thus arm'd, he sent the champions forth
From east to west, from south to north :
' Go, and assert your Saviour's cause ;
Go, spread the triumphs of his cross.' —DR. WATTS.

It is a chief principle, in the religion of Jesus Christ, that the influences of the Holy Spirit are indispensably necessary to make a Christian, and especially a qualified and successful missionary or minister; and it is probable, that before the universal extension of the Redeemer's kingdom among all nations, there will be another effusion of the Holy Spirit, little less eminent than that on the day of Pentecost. " And the same day there were added to the church about three thousand souls;" and soon afterwards their number amounted to five thousand; many of whom, it appears, were foreigners. But it has often been wondered, that there should be at that time "dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." Some learned men have supposed that foreign Jews and proselytes had come thither in great numbers, from all parts, to learn the Hebrew language. But Dr. Lightfoot and others, with more probability, think they were come in expectation of the Messiah and his kingdom; as the time had arrived that he should appear, according to the seventy weeks of Daniel, and the indications of other prophecies. We may

be fully confident, that they were led to Jerusalem by the sovereign providence of God, for the purpose of being instructed in the gospel of Christ, and of being the ministers and agents in carrying it to their native countries; as we learn they “were scattered everywhere,” on “the persecution that arose about Stephen.”

CHAPTER III.

Prosperity of the churches—Election of Deacons—Martyrdom of Stephen—Conversion of the persecutor Saul—His extraordinary labours—Admission of the Gentiles to the church of Christ—Martyrdom of James—Imprisonment of Peter—Confirmation of the churches—Mosaic ceremonies abolished—Separation of Paul and Barnabas—Apostolic epistles published.

No pious mind can possibly reflect without admiration upon the conversion of sinners to God, and upon the increase and harmony, the affection and liberality, of the primitive Christian church at Jerusalem. Nor can we withhold our sincere veneration from the character of the seven Grecian deacons, whom the enlarging church elected for the management of their temporal affairs. Stephen, especially, was singularly eminent both in gifts and grace, and in devotedness to his glorious Master’s service. We must admire him more particularly in his last hours: not so much on account of the overpowering “wisdom and spirit by which he spake;” or for the celestial splendour of his countenance, “as it had been the face of an angel;” as in the compassionate tenderness of his heart towards his bitter and murderous enemies, praying for them even with his dying breath, like his Divine Master, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!”

The martyrdom of Stephen was the commencement of a dreadful persecution of the church; and the principal agent in this diabolical wickedness was Saul, a young collegian of the Pharisees; but who, in the midst of his bloody career, was converted, by the mercy and grace of the Redeemer, to the faith of Christ. Excepting, perhaps, the thief on the cross, there is not so memorable an instance of the sovereignty of divine grace, recorded in the sacred Scriptures. A celebrated noble writer, with much reason, says he thought “the conversion and apostle-

ship of St. Paul alone, duly considered, was a demonstration sufficient to prove Christianity to be a divine revelation.”* There appears to have been a particular reason, in the condition of the church, for the conversion of such a person: for “all the other apostles were men without education, and absolutely ignorant of letters and philosophy; and yet, in the infancy of the Christian church, it was necessary that there should be at least one defender of the gospel, who, versed in the learned arts, might be able to combat the Jewish doctors and the pagan philosophers with their own arms. For this purpose, Jesus himself, by an extraordinary voice from heaven, called to his service a thirteenth apostle, whose name was Saul, (afterwards Paul,) and whose acquaintance both with Jewish and Grecian learning was very considerable. This extraordinary person, who had been one of the most virulent enemies of the Christians, became their most glorious and triumphant defender. Independently of the miraculous gifts with which he was enriched, he was naturally possessed of an invincible courage, an amazing force of genius, and a spirit of patience which no fatigues could overcome, and which no trials could exhaust. To these, the cause of the gospel, under the Divine appointment, owed a considerable part of its rapid progress and surprising success, as the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of St. Paul, abundantly testify.”†

It does not appear, that this new apostle had any personal knowledge of Jesus Christ, during his public ministry upon earth, nor much intercourse with the twelve; and yet his acquaintance with all the ordinances and doctrines of the gospel was evidently equal, if not superior, to theirs. There is indeed, as many suppose, abundant reason to believe, that his knowledge of the sovereign purposes of God, in the mission and mediation of Christ, far exceeded that of the other apostles: yet, as himself declares, “I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Instead of seeking a conference with the other apostles, to be instructed and directed by them, being called and authorized by his blessed Lord in an extraordinary revelation, and qualified by

* Lord Littleton’s Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul.

† Mosheim.

the Holy Spirit, he preached the gospel at Damascus, the ancient capital of Syria, and laboured in the work of the ministry several years, principally in the Grecian cities and provinces, before he had an interview with either of the twelve apostles.

The vision with which Peter was favoured, prepared his mind to welcome the Gentiles into the fold of Christ. It was a surprising instance of the Divine condescension to his remaining Jewish prejudices : it was also designed to be the means of preparing all the Hebrew believers to receive the reported successes attending the missionary labours among the Gentiles ; and to dispose them to strengthen their hands, by the assistance of such ministers as Barnabas, whom they sent for that purpose as far as Antioch.

Persecution was not suffered to sleep : for while the church was taking root in the surrounding and distant cities, the malicious Jews stirred it up at Jerusalem in the politic Herod, the king ; who, to purchase a guilty popularity among them, slew James, one of the apostles, with the sword, and imprisoned another for the same iniquitous purpose.

The history of that persecution, in which the first apostle was martyred, demonstrates to us the sovereignty of the Divine Redeemer, and his incessant care over his church. James, having accomplished his ministry, was permitted to be slain, for the trial of the apostles' faith. But Peter had not yet completed his work ; and, therefore, the "quaternions of soldiers," the "inner prison," the "double chains," the "watching keepers," and the "iron gates," with all the precautions of the king and his coadjutors, were unable to detain the servant of Christ for a moment, if his Master design his preservation. While special prayer-meetings were held by the church, for the purpose of imploring spiritual consolations to be imparted to him in, what they supposed, the trying hour of martyrdom, an angel was commissioned to deliver him from the brutal expectation of the people, and to smite his guilty persecutor with death, by a most horrible and loathsome disease !

By this time, the progress of the gospel must have been very considerable, as the sacred historian says, "The word of God grew and multiplied," so that there were "many prophets and

teachers in the church at Antioch :" two of whom, Barnabas and Saul, were specially sent forth by the Holy Ghost to confirm the minds of the newly formed churches, and to plant others in various Gentile cities. By their appointment to such a mission, the kingdom of Christ was eminently advanced, and the infant congregations were greatly established in evangelical knowledge and brotherly affection. They made a large circuit in the Gentile cities, "confirming the souls of the disciples," by their laborious, authoritative, and affectionate instructions in the doctrines of Christ. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." (Acts xiv. 23.)

There are two circumstances mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, which, at the first, appeared likely to be injurious to the progress and harmony of the church :—the dispute concerning the observance of the Mosaic ceremonies ;—and the difference between Paul and Barnabas. It may be observed, that some of the greatest enemies to the peace of the church, were the Jewish bigots, who affected to be teachers of the gospel, but they were in truth, "subverting the souls of the disciples."

They insisted on the universal observance of the Levitical rites : but the unanimous determination of the question by the apostles and the church at Jerusalem, was of signal service to the Gentile churches, among whom the grace of God was so eminently conspicuous ; and to whom they sent an affectionate letter, and two more faithful labourers. The difference between Paul and Barnabas respected Mark, nephew of Barnabas, whom Paul regarded as unstable, because he had turned back from the missionary work, on a former occasion. The separation of these two laborious ministers was, doubtless, overruled for the greater advancement of their common object, as is evident from the sequel of Paul's history, though we hear but little of the ministry of Barnabas. Mark also became reinstated in Paul's confidence.

The remaining part of the Acts relates chiefly to the history of Paul's surprising labours and successes, until his imprisonment at Rome; and that detailed account affords us a com-

plete exposition of the apostle's religious principles and character. With surpassing wisdom and incessant activity, elevated spirituality of mind, and supreme love to the Saviour, he united the most tender compassion for the souls of men; and no labours were too difficult, nor were any sufferings too great, for his unconquerable and persevering zeal in the cause of his gracious Lord. His whole conduct was a beautiful illustration of Christianity, and of his profession which he made before the Ephesian bishops:—“The Holy Ghost witnessing in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts xx. 23, 24.) His labours were more abundant than all the other apostles, and his sufferings corresponded with them, both in number and in degree. “But besides all those things which were without,” the daily “care of all the churches” devolved upon him. Many of these he planted by his own ministry, and they all participated in his apostolic regards, which were shown by personal visits and instructions, by evangelical messengers, and by inspired letters.

The publication of the apostolical letters, which we possess in the New Testament, eminently displays the wisdom and kindness of God towards his church. While they supply additional confirmation of the diligent and affectionate labours of the apostles, they unfold to us more fully the doctrine of the covenant of grace, and the extensive and glorious designs of the Saviour's mission to our guilty world. In these respects the epistles to the churches remain a permanent monument of mercy, and an inestimable blessing to the people of God, while they demand our daily and devout study.

CHAPTER IV.

State of religion in the churches at the close of the ministry of the apostles—Jerusalem—Samaria—Ethiopia—Philip—Cesarea—Antioch—Rome—Corinth—Galatia—Ephesus—Philippi—Colosse—Thessalonica—Seven churches in Asia.

An acquaintance with the state of religion in the primitive churches, at the close of the apostolical ministry, will be of considerable importance; serving as a key to the correct understanding of many things mentioned in the inspired epistles. To begin with Jerusalem, where the apostles opened their commission. The disciples were very numerous both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and constituted many considerable churches;* but the rigid adherence of many to the ceremonial law, appears to have declined but little. For their instruction preparatory to the full abandonment of the Levitical observances, when Jerusalem with its temple was destroyed, Paul wrote that invaluable letter to the Hebrews. Learned men suppose he undertook that service at the request of the other apostles. In this epistle, the Levitical institution is shown to have been typical of the perfect dispensation of the gospel; and, consequently, its services have no use, now the kingdom of Christ is revealed. In various places the apostle affectionately warns the Hebrew Christians against apostacy in all its degrees, arising from an evil heart of unbelief. From such admonitions, and from the censures of James, in his epistle, it is supposed, that the churches in Judea had much declined from their pristine spirituality and purity, “and that the crafts of Satan, aided by human depravity, were wearing out apace the precious fruits of that effusion of the Spirit which has been described.”†

Samaria was situated in the midst of Palestine; and that district obtained a considerable share in the labours of the apostles. Many were converted by the ministry of our Lord himself, after his discourse with the woman of Sychar. When the persecution arose about Stephen, Philip, the deacon, was

* Acts ix. 31.; Gal. i. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 14.

† Milner.

directed to labour among them; probably in the same city in which our Lord had been successful before him. By his ministry, the gospel was made effectual to convert the hearts of many more, who experienced great “joy and peace in believing, abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” The apostles, hearing of their having received the gospel, deputed Peter and John to visit them, and to preach in the surrounding villages. When Philip had laboured for some time among the Samaritans, he went a long missionary tour, by the direction of an angel; first to meet the Ethiopian eunuch, and afterwards through many cities till he came to Cesarea.

The conversion of the eunuch to the faith of Christ, was the means of introducing the gospel into Ethiopia; and, it is said, that he carried the gospel into Persia, and into the Indies; and that he sealed his doctrine with the blood of martyrdom, in the island of Ceylon.* Philip, in his tour, preached in the towns of the Philistines lying on the coasts, and settled at Cesarea, where he formed a church, and became its pastor, as we find many years after, when he entertained Paul and his company.† Here lived the devout centurion: and it appears that the memorable visit which Peter made to him, happened while Philip was making a missionary tour; and that Cornelius having received the gospel, was one of the principal reasons for Philip settling at Cesarea, as pastor of the Christian church.

The eleventh chapter of the Acts has often been read with peculiar delight, as it contains so much pleasing instruction respecting the progress of the gospel, especially at Antioch, where the disciples were first called CHRISTIANS. This Antioch was at that time one of the most populous and flourishing cities of the east. But the grace of God, which Barnabas saw in the number and heavenly dispositions of the disciples, was far more glorious, in his estimation, than the magnitude and wealth of the city. Having found Paul, he led him thither, and in that place they both laboured, with great success, or about twelve months. In the following chapters there are men-

* Cave's Lives of the Fathers. Life of Philip.

† Acts xxi. 8—16.

tioned, incidentally, many places where Christian churches were formed; and it cannot be doubted that there were many others, flourishing in various places, concerning which we have not the least intimation. The New Testament relates very little of the labours of any of the apostles, except James and John, Peter and Paul: but from their success we may infer that the rest did not labour in vain. It is not certainly known who were the agents in gathering the churches at Colosse or Rome; yet they were both in a flourishing state when the apostle wrote his epistles to them, though he had never visited them.

If we may determine the state of religion in the Roman church, by the excellency of Paul's epistle to them, we shall conclude, that he might very justly "thank God, through Jesus Christ, that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world." It is said that Chrysostom, one of the fathers of the church, esteemed this epistle so greatly, that he caused it to be read to him twice every week: and most certainly it is worthy of being read twice a week by every Christian. On account of the power of godliness, which was so eminently experienced by the Roman church, Paul oftentimes purposed to visit them, to participate in their joy, and to impart some spiritual gift to them, for their further edification and establishment. As he had been hitherto prevented by the necessities of other churches, he wrote this epistle to them, to give a correct and comprehensive view of the gospel dispensation, as a system of grace to both Jews and Gentiles, through a Divine Mediator.

While Paul was first labouring at Corinth, he was unusually discouraged and depressed in mind: but the Lord Jesus assured him in a vision, that he had "much people in this city;" therefore, his presence and blessing should be afforded to him in his work. He continued there a year and a half, preaching the gospel with singular success, and eminent gifts were bestowed upon the Corinthian believers. Soon after the apostle's removal their tranquillity was disturbed by the intrusion of false teachers; hence parties were formed, and lamentable disorders arose, which proves that the power of religion had much declined. A judicious writer observes, "Perhaps no church was more numerous, and none less holy, in the apostolic age.

And it may teach us not to repine at the want of the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit, when we consider that the Corinthians abounded in them.”* The design of the first epistle was, to answer the inquiries which they had made of the apostle in a letter to him; to correct the abuses which existed among them, and to establish the doctrine of the resurrection of believers to a state of eternal glory. The second epistle is richly consolatory, and greatly edifying; it was written in consequence of the former having produced the desired effect, in the reformation of the church.

The Epistle to the Galatians indicates a serious defection in their churches, from the purity and simplicity of evangelical doctrine. They consisted of both Gentile and Jewish converts, among whom there came several judaizing teachers, insisting upon the necessity of submitting to circumcision, and of observing the law of Moses in many of its abolished rites; while at the same time they vilified the character, and questioned the apostleship, of Paul. Their doctrines had been considered by the apostles and church of Jerusalem, and condemned, as “subverting the souls of the disciples.” On account of these churches having been drawn aside by such injurious notions, the apostle Paul defends his own character, and establishes his apostleship, against those enemies of the gospel; seriously, but with warm affection, rebukes the Galatians, and instructs them clearly in the doctrine of justification and salvation by the righteousness and atonement of Jesus Christ. The fruits of his principles, he insists, must be manifested by walking in the Spirit, and glorifying God.

The Ephesian church appears to have been in a singularly prosperous condition, as there is no rebuke or censure contained in the whole epistle. This society had been favoured with the ministry of the apostle Paul more than any other people. For about three years they had enjoyed the benefit of his personal instructions; and the fruit of his labours was very abundant and long-continued. It is observed of the epistle to this church, that the elevated manner in which the apostle treats of the eternal purposes of God, and of the manifestation of redeeming mercy by Jesus Christ, distinguishes

* Milner.

it from all the others. This seems to indicate the matured spirituality of the church; while the practical directions, in the closing part of the epistle, evince the inseparable connexion between the sublimest doctrines and the purest morality.

The Philippian churches are memorable for the interesting conversion of two of their earliest members—Lydia and the brutal jailer. The Epistle to the Philippians was written in consequence of their continued pecuniary contributions for the relief of the apostle Paul, while he was a prisoner at Rome; and it was sent to them by Epaphroditus, one of their pastors. It shows that their Christian affection for their father in the gospel was unabated; and that his regard for them was the most tender. The power of religion appears to have been great among them; but the apostle considered them in danger, on one hand from false teachers, and on the other from licentious professors of the gospel: against both of whom he warns and instructs them.

The kindest affection breathes in the Epistle to the Colossian church. It is believed that the apostle had never visited the Colossians: yet his heart rejoiced in the evangelical order of their sacred worship, and in hearing of the pious steadfastness of their faith in Christ. The epistle to them was designed to warn them against the doctrines of false philosophy, and the worship of angels, and to show them more fully, that the salvation of sinners depends on the divine dignity and mediatorial glory of Jesus Christ. The amiable Philemon is thought to have been a member of the Colossian church, who held their religious assemblies at his house.

The flourishing piety of the Thessalonians is highly commended by the apostle. They appear to have been inferior to none of the churches in genuine, active godliness. The first epistle to them was designed to encourage them under the persecutions which they endured: the second was written to correct their mistaken notions respecting the second coming of Christ. The latter epistle is celebrated for its remarkable prophecy of the rise, and character, and destruction, of the Papal Antichrist.

There are yet to be noticed the seven churches in Asia, to whom the apostle John was commanded to address his epistles,

which are contained in the first three chapters in the Book of the Revelation.

Ephesus is the first church mentioned. John was banished to the isle of Patmos, by the savage emperor Domitian, about the year of Christ ninety-five, which was nearly forty years later than St. Paul's epistles were written to the churches. It appears, therefore, that the Ephesians had retained their soundness and purity of doctrine, and, by a consistency of conduct, evinced the genuine influence of those principles which they had received from the ministry of Paul. Still they were rebuked, as exhibiting a spiritual declension : their love to the Redeemer having considerably abated in its strength and exercise. On this account they are admonished with terror, yet with tenderness, by their Lord and Saviour, in this epistle, and invited to return, performing their first works.

The church at Smyrna is the second addressed ; and this is the first occasion on which we hear of them. Their outward circumstances indicated poverty, but they were "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven." The Saviour warns them to expect a severe persecution for the trial of their principles, in the prospect of which they are encouraged with the assurance of a crown of life.

Pergamos is next mentioned, and with commendations. Of this church, also, we know but little, besides what is here recorded. They seem to have been surrounded with idolatry and corruption, as in a strong fortification : in so great a degree, indeed, as to occasion its being called "Satan's seat." Of Antipas, the martyr, we know nothing more than the immortal encomium pronounced upon him here by his Lord and Saviour. The licentiousness of Balaam's doctrine, and the impure notions of the Nicolaitanes, received a measure of countenance from some of this church : this indicated a considerable declension in the purity and power of religion among them : they are therefore admonished to repent.

Thyatira is both commended and censured. That church abounded in genuine piety and good works ; but some of its members were infected with the same corruptions as the church at Pergamos. An artful woman, allegorically called Jezebel, seduced some of them to the commission of her abominations.

The church at Sardis is represented as in a very declining state. The aged members of this church being removed by death, the majority of professors in Sardis were destitute of the spirit of piety, and they made light of practical godliness: yet there were a few left who maintained fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Philadelphia exhibits a more inviting spectacle. The trials and persecutions which attended this people, were the means of preserving their fruitfulness. Their good works and decision of character are commended by the Saviour, who assures them of his perpetual regard, his sure protection, and the heavenly felicity.

The declensions and lukewarmness of the Laodicean church were grievously lamentable: so much so as to have become proverbial. The picture which the Saviour draws of their spiritual condition is deeply affecting. They had not, indeed, renounced or denied any of the grand essentials of the gospel, much less had they abandoned the profession of the Saviour's name; but, as a church, they had sunk deplorably into worldly indifference. "They had lost the conviction of their internal blindness, misery, and depravity. They were satisfied with themselves, and felt no need of higher attainment. They had learned to maintain, in easy indolence, an orthodoxy of sentiment, without any vivid attention to the Spirit of God."

CHAPTER V.

Want of inspired history—Persecution under Nero—Conflagration at Rome—Falsely charged upon the Christians—Domitian's persecution—Banishment of John.

WE have at length arrived at the close of the church's history, as contained in the inspired writings. But in pursuing its course to the end of the century, we painfully feel the want of an infallible guide, in detailing the principal facts connected with its progress. We are not absolutely without materials, but they are both scanty and uncertain in the information which they convey to us. The closing passage of the

inspired history declares, “ Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house at Rome, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” (Acts xxviii. 30, 31.) As to the number of the converts to Christ, who were found in the imperial city, we are unable correctly to ascertain; but they must have been exceedingly numerous, as is evident from the extent of that dreadful persecution which was raised about the year A. D. 65; in which the apostle Paul, and, as uncertain traditions say, the apostle Peter also, finished their ministry, by shedding their blood in martyrdom, as it had been intimated to them by their Lord and Saviour. Erastus of Corinth, Aristarchus the Macedonian, Trophimus, and others mentioned in the New Testament, are said to have suffered at the same time.

This furious persecution was occasioned by the tremendous conflagration at Rome; and which was charged upon the Christians by the emperor Nero. It is related, that “ Nero himself was the author of the dismal distress, by causing the city to be set on fire in different places. The devouring element prevailed for nine successive days, and destroyed the greater part of the city. That while the flames were raging in every direction, and multitudes were perishing under the falling ruins, the brutal emperor placed himself upon the top of a high tower, where he enjoyed the consternation, amusing himself with singing to his lyre the burning and destruction of ancient Troy.” Such is the account given by the most respectable contemporary historians; and it perfectly accords with the general character of Nero, who was one of the greatest monsters, in wickedness, that ever disgraced human nature. He was not, however, totally void of shame or fear; and, to divert the suspicion of his being the author of this horrible deed, he endeavoured to transfer the guilt of it to the innocent disciples of Christ; who were regarded by the superstitious pagans, as enemies of mankind, because they abhorred the popular idolatrous customs. We are told by the Roman historian, “ They were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome, as of hatred to mankind. Their sufferings at their execution were aggravated by insult and mockery; for some

were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs. Some were crucified; others were wrapped in pitched shirts, and set on fire when the day closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night. Their heads were held up by stakes fixed under their chins, till they made a long stream of blood and melted sulphur on the ground. Nero lent his own gardens for these executions, and exhibited at the same time a mock Circensian entertainment; being a spectator of the whole in the dress of a charioteer, sometimes mingling with the crowd on foot, and sometimes viewing the spectacle from his car.”* As these testimonies are from the pagan enemies of Christianity, all suspicion of their truth or accuracy is removed.

Still these cruel destructions did not extirpate the infant church. Imperial, or even infernal malice could not effect this: and we may conclude with certainty, that in their extreme sufferings, those holy martyrs enjoyed the divine consolations, for which the apostle prayed on behalf of the believing Romans. “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” This persecution raged until A. D. 68, when, by an act of suicide, Nero, detested by all men, put a period to his own iniquitous course. This wretched being had murdered his own mother Agrippina, his tutor Seneca, and his two wives, Octavianus and Poppea!

The second general persecution was raised against the Christians in the year A. D. 95, in the latter end of the reign of Domitian, who renewed the horrors of Nero’s cruelty. This persecution continued about two years, when Domitian was slain. It was distinguished by several martyrs at Rome, of elevated stations in life; among whom were Clemens Flavius and his wife Flavia Domitilla, relations of the emperor, and Acilius Glabrio, a consul. By the order of Domitian, John the apostle was banished to the isle of Patmos; in which he was favoured with the visions of God, and wrote the last book of the New Testament.

* See Remarks on these testimonies in Paley’s Evidences of Christianity.

CHAPTER VI.

Extent of Christianity at the close of the first century—Destruction of Jerusalem—Introduction of Christianity into Britain—Causes of the success of the founders of Christianity—Continuance of miraculous powers.

IN endeavouring to ascertain the extent of the progress of the gospel, in other parts of the Roman empire, we feel the want of authentic information. However, according to the prediction of our blessed Lord, the gospel was preached in all parts of the world, for a witness to all nations, before the destruction of Jerusalem. (Matt. xxiv. 14.)

This awful catastrophe befel the Jews, agreeably to what our Saviour had foretold. This infatuated people, rejecting the Messiah, and, at the tribunal of Pilate, demanding his crucifixion, said, “His blood be on us, and on our children.” Willingly deluded by several impostors, each pretending to be the promised Christ, and impatient of a foreign yoke, they revolted against the Romans, and drew down upon themselves the vengeance of their terrible legions. Jerusalem was taken A. D. 70; the city and temple were destroyed; and both being levelled with the dust, the ground was ploughed up, for the purpose of obtaining the precious things which were buried in the rubbish. In this awful visitation of God, the shocking imprecation of the Jews was answered: for, besides ninety-seven thousand of the captives, who were sold for slaves in the neighbouring nations, and multitudes who were transported to the mines in Egypt, one million and one hundred thousand perished, by famine and pestilence, by the sword and crucifixion! The Christian church at Jerusalem were all delivered: for the besieging army withdrew for a time, and every believer, remembering the admonition of Christ, withdrew in safety to Pella and other places, beyond the river Jordan.

From the successes of Paul and his colleagues, we may conclude that the Saviour’s prediction was completely fulfilled, by means of the united labours of all the apostles and evangelical labourers. “It appears, from the writers of the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel was preached, not only in the Lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the great

theatres of action then in the world : but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia, and as far westward as Spain and Britain.”*

It is generally allowed that Christianity was embraced by the Britons in the apostolic age : but the accounts which we have on this subject are extremely doubtful and different. It is probable, however, that the sacred treasure was brought here by some of the Roman merchants or colonists ; or by the young men who, at that time, were sent to Rome for education. Some suppose that Paul visited Britain after his journey into Spain ; being solicited by Claudia, (2 Tim. iv. 21,) who is thought to have been a British lady of distinction, if not a daughter of king Caractacus, and married to Pudens, a Roman senator. The most popular accounts state, that the captivity and degradation of the celebrated Caractacus and his family, were the appointed means, under Providence, of blessing the Britons with the glorious liberty and divine honours of the gospel. To withstand the Romans, Caractacus, a Welch chief, had been chosen, as the commander of the British army : but after a struggle of nine years, he was overcome ; betrayed to the Roman general, and, with Bran his father, and his family, was carried captive to Rome, to grace the triumphal procession of the victor, Ostorius. Bran, and several of his family, it is said, became converts to the faith of Christ ; and returning from Rome, after seven years’ captivity, they brought with them several Christian preachers, to assist them in propagating the gospel among their ignorant and idolatrous fellow-countrymen in Wales and Britain. The names of three of their preachers were Ilid, an Israelite, and Cynday and Arwystli, who appear to have been Gentiles. They were successful in bringing many to the knowledge of Christ ; on which account, Bran was called “one of the three blessed sovereigns of Britain.” Cyllin, son of Caractacus, was called Saint Cyllin ; and Eigin, his daughter, is recorded as the first British saint !

Frequently it has been asked, What must be regarded as the

* Newton on the Prophecies, Diss. XVIII.

principal causes of the wonderful progress of the gospel? To which it may be replied, Much is certainly to be attributed to the unconquerable zeal of the first preachers, united with the most exalted purity of character, and the warmest benevolence of heart. By the influence of the doctrine which they preached, they were prepared to exhibit a magnanimity superior to all difficulties; a just and rational contempt of riches and honours; a serene tranquillity in the prospect of death, and an invincible patience under torments far more terrible than even death itself. But these holy and excellent qualifications are not, in themselves, sufficient to account for their successes. When we reflect upon the rapid progress of Christianity among the Gentile nations, destroying the most deeply rooted prejudices and ancient superstitions,—and consider, that the agents by whom this was accomplished were friendless, and mostly uneducated Jews, taken from the lowest walks of life, and who employed no means besides the art of persuasion,—we must feel astonishment: yet we find a sufficient cause of all their successes, in the miraculous powers with which they were invested, to awaken the attention of men, and to confirm the divinity of their mission; and especially in the sovereign and omnipotent influences of the Holy Spirit, which constantly attended their ministry, and were, in reality, the only efficient cause of their wondrous triumph.

It has been maintained, even by some Protestants, that the apostles were capable of imparting miraculous powers to the new converts; and that these extraordinary qualifications continued in the church for ages after their decease. The Roman Catholics teach, that the power of working miracles has never ceased in their church, even to the present time: but their delusions and impositions are notorious. Some, also, in the Church of England, and in the Church of Scotland, are now exceedingly zealous in propagating the doctrine of miraculous powers and tongues. But it is a serious error to suppose, that even the apostles possessed ability to communicate miraculous powers to any one. They could not, at their own will, employ those with which themselves were endowed; nor speak with other tongues, only “as the Spirit gave them utterance.” As to miracles, they were all wrought by the imme-

diate power of Christ, on occasions which he saw worthy of his interposition. The apostles were, however, honoured by their blessed Lord, as the means of conveying to many the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the work of the ministry; and immediately after baptism by them, some such were qualified, by the sovereign gifts of the Spirit, to speak with other tongues for the edification of the church. That the power of working miracles continued in the church after the decease of the apostles, there can be but little doubt; but how long, and to what extent, cannot be ascertained. Speaking of the immediate successors of the apostles, Dr. Middleton observes, “There is not the least claim or pretension in all their several pieces, or in those of Ignatius and Polycarp, who were nearly contemporaneous, to any extraordinary gifts or power of working miracles, as residing amongst them, for the conversion of the heathen world. The whole of their writings is to illustrate the excellency and purity of the doctrine of Christ; and the whole power of their ministry seems to have lain in the innocent and amiable tenour of their lives and conduct, and in the pious, charitable, and affectionate strain of their pastoral instructions.”

CHAPTER VII.

Apostolic biography—Peter—Andrew—James—John—Philip—Bartholomew—Thomas—Matthew—James the Less—Jude—Simon—Matthias—Paul—Mark—Luke—Evangelists and Apostolic Fathers; Barnabas—Timothy—Titus—Hermas—Clement.

EVERY one will perceive the propriety of presenting in this place some brief notices of the inspired founders of the church of Christ.

1. Peter is mentioned first. Very little is known of this apostle, besides what is contained in the New Testament. The Roman Catholics contend, that he was bishop of Rome for twenty-five years; but we have no satisfactory evidence from history that Peter ever was at Rome, much less bishop of that city. Probable tradition reports, that he came to Rome during the persecution by Nero, and that he was apprehended and crucified. It is said, also, that, remembering his shameful

denial of his Lord, at his own request, he suffered with his head downwards.

2. Andrew, the brother of Peter, is said to have prosecuted his missionary labours among the Scythians, Sogdians, and Ethiopians : that he made many converts to Christ in Greece, Epirus, and Achaia : that he founded a church at Constantinople ; ordained Stachys ; and that at Patrae, a city in Achaia, Ægeas the proconsul crucified him ; being provoked that Maximilla his wife, and Stratocles his brother, had embraced Christianity.

3. James, the son of Zebedee, as we have seen, was put to death by Herod Agrippa. It is said, that the officer who brought James to the tribunal, observing his pious cheerfulness after his condemnation, confessed himself a Christian, and was beheaded with him. The tyrant Herod was smitten by the hand of God, and died in agony, being devoured by worms. (Acts xii.)

4. John was the brother of James ; and both of whom, for their powerful eloquence, were named by their blessed Master “Boanerges,” sons of thunder. John was pre-eminently beloved by our Lord, and to his care he committed his mother. Leaving Judea before the destruction of Jerusalem, he laboured chiefly in Asia Minor, particularly at Ephesus. The churches in Pergamos, Thyatira, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, are said to have been founded by him. In the Domitian persecution, A. D. 95, it is related, he was put into a chaldron of boiling oil, in which he stood for several hours unhurt. Being taken out, he was banished to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation. From this island he returned the next year, and resided chiefly at Ephesus, until A. D. 100 ; when, beloved of all, and at the advanced age of a hundred years, he died in peace. Several characteristic anecdotes are recorded concerning this venerable apostle, which it seems proper to notice. On one of his visits to a neighbouring church, he saw a young man, whom he committed to the minister for a religious education ; but during the apostle’s banishment he absconded. On his return, the minister informed him, “He is dead : that is, he is dead to God ; for he is become a robber in the mountains.” The aged apostle obtained a

horse, engaged a guide, pursued, and found the bandit ; tenderly invited his confidence, and directed him to the fountain of mercy in Christ. The young apostate was reclaimed ; and lived and died an honour to his Christian profession. In his extreme age and feebleness, he was accustomed to be led to the church, giving them only, as an address, this short exhortation, “ Love one another : little children, love one another.”

5. Philip, we are told, prosecuted his evangelical mission with success, in Upper Asia, part of Scythia, and Colchis. About A. D. 52, he suffered martyrdom at Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia, being put to death by the votaries of Jupiter Ammon.

6. Bartholomew, supposed to be Nathanael, called by our Lord “an Israelite indeed,” is said to have been apprehended with Philip. But an earthquake happening while Bartholomew was bound to a cross, he was released. He laboured in Judea, Ethiopia, and Arabia ; and at last in Albania, in the Greater Armenia, where the governor commanded him to be crucified. He endured this death with cheerfulness and triumph, comforting and confirming the Gentile converts to the last moments of his life, which happened A. D. 72.

7. Thomas, called Didymus, or the Twin, prosecuted his mission among the Persians, Medes, Hyrcanians, and Bactrians. Chrysostom says, “ Thomas, who at first was the most weak and the most incredulous of all the apostles, became, through the condescension of Jesus Christ to satisfy his scruples, the most fervent, powerful, and invincible of them all ; and went through almost all parts of the world, and lived without fear in the midst of the most barbarous nations, performing his duty without any regard to his life. And being encouraged by a divine vision, he travelled into the Indies, to Malabar, and the country of the Brahmins, who, fearing the downfall of their rites and religion, resolved upon his death ; and accordingly, when he was intent at prayer, they stoned him, wounded him with darts, and at length, one coming near, thrust him through with a lance,” A. D. 73.

8. Mattheus : of this apostle and evangelist we know but little ; yet it is related, that he laboured to evangelize the Ethiopians, Persians, and Parthians ; and at length suffered

martyrdom at Naddabar in Asiatic Ethiopia, being slain with a halbert, A. D. 60.

9. James, the son of Alpheus, is styled "the Lord's brother," and also "James the Less," and "James the Just." He is considered as having been the first bishop of the church at Jerusalem. He was a man remarkable for prayer and holiness of life. Ananias, the Jewish high priest, with the Scribes and Pharisees, called him, at the passover, to stand upon the porch of the temple, to satisfy the doubting minds of the people concerning the faith of Christ: but being enraged that his doctrine was received by many, they threw him from the battlements; and, while he was praying for his murderers, some of them beat him on the head with a fuller's club, of which he died. Thus he was martyred by the mob, while no Roman governor was at Jerusalem, A. D. 62.

10. Jude, or Lebbeus Thaddeus, was the writer of the epistle bearing the name of Jude. At the commencement of his ministry, he preached in Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Idumea, and afterwards in Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia; confirming his doctrines with miracles. We have no certain information of the termination of his ministry, though it is related by some that the Magi put him to death in Persia.

11. Simon Zelotes, the Canaanite, the son of Cleophas, is said to have preached the gospel in Egypt, Cyrene, Libya, and Mauritania. Some have affirmed, that he preached the gospel in Britain; and others, that he was bishop of Jerusalem until A. D. 107, when he was crucified at the advanced age of one hundred and twenty years.

12. Judas Iscariot was the wretched apostate and hypocritical betrayer of Jesus Christ; and who, by an act of suicide, went to his own place!

Matthias was chosen to fill the office of the traitor. He is believed to have been one of the seventy disciples. Leaving Judea, it is said, he laboured in Cappadocia, where he probably died a martyr. Some Greek writers say he was hanged upon a cross.

13. Paul's life, labours, and successes, are so fully detailed in the New Testament, that little is necessary to be said here,

except what is related concerning the immediate cause of his martyrdom, which was Poppea Sabina, concubine to the emperor Nero, embracing the Christian faith. This so enraged the tyrant, that he determined on the apostle's immediate destruction. He was beheaded A.D. 66.

14. Mark, the evangelist, is stated to have been sent by Peter to advance the cause of Christ in Egypt. His ministry was successful in Libya, Marmorica, and Pentapolis. He suffered various brutalities at Alexandria, at the celebration of one of the solemnities of Serapis, an Egyptian deity, and died of his wounds.

15. Luke, the evangelist, the faithful companion of Paul, and writer of the Gospel bearing his name, and the Acts of the Apostles, was a physician; but being converted to the faith of Christ, he consecrated all his powers to the glory of his Lord and Saviour. He is said by some to have suffered martyrdom under Nero; but others affirm, that after the death of Paul, having published the faith in France, Italy, and Macedonia, he was seized by a party of pagans while preaching in Greece, and hanged on a tree.

Besides the apostles and the inspired evangelists, some of their immediate successors, mentioned in the New Testament, must here be noticed as men of the same elevated spirit: but though they do not rank among the inspired writers, they were eminently honoured of God in carrying forward the designs of his mercy. Among these apostolical fathers, the first in rank must be assigned to

1. Barnabas, the evangelist: he is believed to have been a Levite, and one of the seventy disciples of Christ. His proper name was Joses; to which the apostles added Barnabas, which signifies the "son of consolation," (Acts iv. 36, 37.) This name is believed to have been given to him on account of his singular talents as a minister, in comforting and establishing weak believers. He was a person of great note among the apostles; and in his missionary labours, some of which he prosecuted in company with Paul, he was eminently successful. Uncertain tradition says, that he founded churches at Milan in Italy, and at Salamis in Cyprus, where he was stoned to death by the infidel Jews.

2. Timothy, the evangelist, was blessed with a pious mother and grandmother, whose early instructions and prayers were answered in the eminence of his religious character. He became a devoted assistant to the apostle Paul; for many years co-operated with him in establishing and regulating the newly-formed churches. The Roman Catholics call him Bishop of Ephesus; but it is evident, from the Scriptures, that his office was extraordinary,—that of an evangelist. He is reported to have suffered martyrdom at Ephesus, being killed by the rabble at an idolatrous festival, about A. D. 97.

3. Titus, the evangelist, had been an idolatrous Gentile; but he appears to have been converted to the faith of Christ by Paul's ministry. He became a faithful assistant to the apostle in his various labours, accompanying him to Jerusalem, and to other places. He fulfilled several missions to Corinth, Crete, and Dalmatia. We have no certain information concerning his death, though some say he died on the island of Crete at a very advanced age.

4. Hermas, Rom. xvi., is supposed to have been a minister of some eminence among the primitive Christians. Though but little is known concerning him, his name is of some note on account of a small book which he wrote, entitled "The Pastor."

5. Clement is mentioned Phil. iv. 3. It is said by some that Clement was the pastor of the Jewish Christians at Rome, while Linus, and after him Anacletus, held the same office among the Gentile believers. After the decease of Anacletus, it is stated that the Roman Christians were united under Clement, as their chosen pastor; he is therefore called "the third bishop of Rome." He presided over this church nine years, and died in the reign of Trajan, A. D. 100. There is extant a letter to the Corinthians, written by Clement in the name of the Roman church, and which, in its style, somewhat resembles the Epistle to the Hebrews. It breathes the pure spirit of Christian benevolence: and though it is manifest that it is greatly inferior to the inspired writings, it is esteemed "the most precious and valuable treasure the church can boast after the Holy Scriptures."

CHAPTER VIII.

Constitution of the primitive Churches—Extraordinary ministers their founders—Preaching Elders—Manner of their public worship—Possession of the Scriptures.

So extravagant have been the claims of what are improperly called the *Christian Priesthood*, in different nations and periods, that it will be the more necessary to notice the constitution of the apostolical churches.

Their founders were extraordinary agents, qualified miraculously by our blessed Lord, by whom they were employed. These were 1. **APOSTLES**, whose mission embraced the whole world. 2. **EVANGELISTS**, who were assistants to them, sent by the apostles, not to settle as pastors, but to travel among the infant churches, ordaining their proper officers, and completing the work which the apostles had begun. Of these, Mark and Luke were inspired writers. 3. **PROPHETS**, who were specially inspired, to instruct the infant churches, by expounding the Old Testament predictions, and preaching the gospel for their edification. (Eph. iv. 11.) These being extraordinary ministers, they had no successors in their office.

The ordinary officers of the churches were two, **BISHOPS** and **DEACONS**. (Phil. i. 1.) *Bishops*, of whom there sometimes were two or more in a congregation, were also Overseers, Pastors, and Teachers. (Acts xx. 17; Eph. iv. 11; 1 Tim. iii.) *Deacons* were persons chosen by the people, to attend to the temporal affairs of the churches, and especially to the necessities of the poor; but being men of piety, on account of which they were elected to office, they sometimes exercised their gifts in defending their faith, and in preaching the gospel. (Acts iv.; 1 Tim. iii.)

In every place in which the gospel was preached, it was the means of converting sinners to God, and the company of believers was formed into a religious community. The learned Dr. Mosheim, in his valuable Ecclesiastical History, giving an account of the churches of the first and second centuries, says, “In those early times, every Christian church consisted of

the people, their leaders, and the deacons. It was the assembly of the people which chose their own rulers and teachers, or received them by a free and authoritative consent, when recommended by others. *Every Christian assembly was a little state*, governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or at least approved, by the society. Whoever acknowledged Christ as the Saviour of mankind, and made a solemn profession of his confidence in him, was immediately baptized, and received into the church. One bishop presided over each Christian assembly, to which office he was elected by the voice of the whole people. There reigned among the members of the Christian church, however distinguished they were by worldly rank and titles, not only an amiable harmony, but also a perfect equality."

Among the primitive believers, every Christian considered himself under obligations to promulgate the gospel of Christ; and the more mature members of the several churches were ever ready to go forth into the neighbouring districts as "Home Missionaries," to publish the doctrines of salvation, after the manner of the "Lay Preachers" among the Congregational churches in England, or as the "Local Preachers" among the Methodists.

In some churches, it appears that there were several of the senior brethren, possessing "the gift of prayer," and endowed with suitable talents for exhortation; and though these elders were only private members, and not devoted to the pastoral office, their gifts were eminently useful in extending the knowledge of eternal life through the Redeemer. The deacons and bishops were generally chosen from this class, as appears from the apostle's writings.

The manner in which the public worship was conducted among the early Christians, was exceedingly simple. When they were permitted by the ruling powers to hold their religious meetings, they assembled on the first day of the week, which was called *The Lord's Day*: reading the Scriptures formed a principal part of the service. One of the lessons was usually expounded by the bishop, who made an application of the doctrine, in an exhortation to the people to cherish believing confidence in Jesus Christ, to persevere in the exercises of

habitual piety, and to practise the various duties of a virtuous life. Prayers, from the fulness of his heart, were offered by the bishops, to the throne of grace, for blessings suitable to the necessities of the people, and psalms and hymns were sung by the congregation. The whole religious services of the Sabbath were closed by the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This was followed by a common meal, generally supplied by the more wealthy members, and which, from the excellent end it was designed to promote, was called "The Love Feast."

Whether the whole Scriptures were possessed by every church in the first century, has been frequently inquired; to this it may be replied, Probably they were not all possessed by every church, as the persons and churches to whom they were addressed were widely separated from each other. The Greek translation of the Old Testament appears to have been generally possessed by every church in the first century; and it is well known, that before the middle of the second century, the greater number of the New Testament books were collected into a volume, and read in every Christian society throughout the world, as a divine rule of faith and manners. From which it is plain, that the sacred writings were carefully separated from the spurious and imperfect compositions which had been published, even in the apostolic age. We are well assured, that the other three Gospels were collected by John before he wrote his own; and from the mention which Peter makes of "all Paul's epistles," we have reason to conclude, that the New Testament books were nearly all collected into a volume during the life of the apostle John. But as in those ages books were all written with the pen, and consequently of great value, very few manuscripts contained the whole collection of the sacred writings, and still fewer were possessed by individuals among the poorer members of the first Christian churches.

CHAPTER IX.

Heresies among the primitive Christians—Morals of the heretics—Heresies not acknowledged by the Scriptural Churches—Doctrines of the primitive Christians—Purity of their morals—Motives of their enemies in persecuting them.

IT is evident from the writings of the apostles, that some dangerous errors had arisen in the churches, even in their days; it will be necessary to notice them, therefore, in this place, as they have been revived in various forms, by speculative, irreligious professors, even in our times.

The principal heresies of the first century were those which related to the person of Christ; some denying his Godhead, and others his manhood. Both, of course, rejected the doctrine of an atonement to Divine justice by his death, as a sacrifice for the sins of men. Those who denied the proper humanity of Christ, were the admirers of the eastern philosophy, which gives a confused and ridiculous account of the world of spirits. They affirmed that Christ was a kind of inferior divinity, and that he died on the cross only in appearance; that what was crucified was a mere phantom instead of a man. The father and first propagator of this doctrine is supposed to have been Simon the sorcerer, who is mentioned Acts viii. Those who denied the true divinity of our Saviour, had two leaders of some note; Cerinthus, and his disciple Ebion. There were some shades of difference in their opinions, as Cerinthus admitted the pre-existence of Christ; but Ebion, to remove all mystery from the doctrine, denied that he was any more than a merely human teacher, of an excellent character. To refute their pernicious notions, as is generally believed, John wrote his three epistles, and, at last, his Gospel, in which are clearly taught both the divine and human natures of our Lord and Saviour, and his propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

The practices of mankind always correspond with their principles; and the manners of these heretics were as far from moral purity as their doctrines were from the truth of the gospel. One class of them, like some of the ancient philosophers,

professed a severe and singular mortification, with a constant contemplation of celestial things: but this had no influence upon the heart, in producing active love to God, and benevolence to man. Against such vain principles, we observe, the apostle Paul warns the Colossians. But others maintained, there was no moral difference in human actions; and, therefore, they gave a loose rein to their passions, asserting the innocence of gratifying all their corrupt propensities, and living according to their unrestrained dictates.

It does not appear that the heretical leaders were acknowledged as belonging to the true church, either as members, or in friendly communion. Such was the abhorrence in which the principles of these heresies were commonly held, that Irenæus, an ancient writer, says, “John, going to the public baths one day, and learning that Cerinthus was there, started back, and said to his friends, ‘Let us, my brethren, make haste and be gone; lest the bath wherein there is such a heretic as Cerinthus, that great enemy of the truth, should fall upon our heads.’”*

From the few books which the fathers of the church, in the first century, have left behind them, we learn, that, “in doctrines, the primitive Christians were agreed. They all worshipped the one living and true God, who had made himself known to them in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into whose name they had been baptized. They all concurred in a feeling conviction of sin, of helplessness, of a state of perdition: in relying on the atoning blood, perfect righteousness, and prevalent intercession of Jesus, as their only hope of heaven. Regeneration by the Holy Ghost was their common privilege, and without his constant influence, they owned themselves obnoxious only to sin and vanity.”†

The first Christians are known to have been shamefully calumniated by their pagan and Jewish enemies; and, as it was in the days of the apostles, of which they complain in their epistles, there might be some who professed to be Christians, whose lives were a scandal to the sacred name by which they were called. But while we are not to regard them, as exhibit-

* Cave's Lives of the Fathers.—Life of John.

† Milner, Vol. i. p. 143.

ing a perfection of virtue without any defect or fault, yet for spirituality of mind,—purity of life,—honesty in dealing,—charity to the poor,—compassion for the miserable,—brotherly love, and universal benevolence, they presented a singular contrast to the principles and manners of both pagans and Jews. Their general character is testified, by their most acute enemies, to have been distinguished by every moral excellency. Pliny, a Roman governor in Bithynia, being weary of putting to death innocent persons, merely on account of being called Christians, wrote to Trajan, the emperor, for fresh instructions, about A. D. 106. In his letter, he makes no accusation of immorality against them; and states what he had learned concerning the Christians, on examining some who had apostatized. He says, “They were accustomed upon a stated day to meet before sun-rise, and to sing among themselves a hymn to Christ, as the God whom they worshipped, and oblige themselves by an oath not to commit any wickedness, but to abstain from theft, robbery, adultery, to keep their promises, and when required, to restore any pledge intrusted to them.” This testimony must be considered as extraordinary; especially as it was given by apostates, and reported by a pagan persecutor.

Now as the Christians were not convicted of any crime, it has frequently excited wonder in the minds of reflecting persons, what could induce the Roman emperors so barbarously to persecute them. One principal reason appears to have been, the abhorrence and contempt with which the Christians regarded the idolatries and superstitions of the empire. They dared to condemn all the absurdities of their corrupt systems of worship. They required a universal abandonment of all the forms of religion besides their own. They laboured to convince men of the righteous judgment of God; and, with unwearyed assiduity, to convert them, by bringing them to repentance, and to receive the gospel of Christ for their salvation. On these accounts they were hated by the magistrates and the priests, as disturbers of the world, and enemies of their gods: and as the Christians had no splendid temples, images, or imposing ceremonies of worship, their simplicity brought down upon them the rage of the ignorant populace.

CHAPTER X.

CENTURY II.

Extension of the gospel in the second century—Britain—Eminent Christians—Ignatius—Justin—Polycarp—Quadratus—Pothinus—Irenæus—Emperors Trajan and the Antonines—Various martyrs—Roman emperors—Christian doctrines corrupted—Liberty of the church infringed by establishing a prelacy in some places—Gospel worship disfigured by new rites—Heresies—Genuine religion—Easter controversy.

In the second century, the profession of Christianity was considerably extended throughout the nations of the East; among several tribes in Germany, and in some provinces of France, in Spain, and in Britain; though we have no authentic history which gives us precise and full information. Pothinus, from Asia Minor, and some others, laboured with remarkable success in a mission to France; and by their ministry flourishing churches were gathered at Vienne and Lyons. About the middle of this century, Justin Martyr, in an apology addressed to the emperor on behalf of the Christians, says, “There is no nation of men, whether Greeks or barbarians, not excepting those savages, that wander in clans from one region to another, and have no fixed habitation, who have not learned to offer prayers and thanksgivings, to the Father and Maker of all, in the name of Jesus who was crucified.” Before the close of the century, Tertullian, in an apology for the disciples of Christ, says, “We are but of yesterday, and yet we fill all that is called yours:—your cities, islands, forts, towns, assemblies, camps, wards, divisions, palaces, senate, court. From these documents it is evident that professors of the gospel, and doubtless real Christians, were exceedingly numerous.

The most extravagant fictions are recorded concerning Lucius, the first Christian king in Britain: but notwithstanding the incredible and contradictory statements, it appears that much good was effected in his time. Lucius was a petty prince in Essex, under the Roman authority, about A. D. 170; and becoming a convert to Christianity, he sent to Eleutherius, the Roman bishop, for his advice and assistance, in propagating the gospel among his people; and several British youths

were placed under his care. Fagan, Damian, and others, were employed as missionaries; many of all classes were baptized; the pagan places of worship were gradually converted into Christian sanctuaries; and we conclude that many churches were planted, and that the gospel made considerable progress through the island.

The most celebrated leaders among the Christians, in the second century, were Ignatius, bishop of Antioch; Justin, a philosopher; Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna; Quadratus, bishop of Athens; Pothinus, and his successor Irenaeus, bishops of Lyons; all of whom suffered martyrdom.

1. Ignatius is said to have been acquainted with the apostles Peter and Paul, and to have been ordained bishop of Antioch, about A. D. 67, by John the apostle, whose instructions he had for some time enjoyed. At Antioch he continued a zealous defender of the great doctrines of the gospel during forty years, till the emperor Trajan visited that city; when Ignatius, being somewhat unlike the apostles, though sincere, even ambitious for the crown of martyrdom, presented himself before his pagan sovereign, and defended the faith of Christ with much freedom.

The emperor treated his doctrine with contempt, and passed sentence upon him, that being incurably superstitious, he should be carried bound to Rome, and there thrown to the wild beasts. He was conveyed to the imperial city, and was there devoured by the beasts in the presence of a crowded theatre, A. D. 109. On his journey, he wrote several letters to individuals and to churches; exhorting them to constancy in the faith, and desiring their prayers. In his letter to the Roman believers, he expresses his contempt of death with all its terrors. "Let the fire," says he, "and the cross, and the assaults of wild beasts, the breaking of bones, the cutting of limbs, battering the whole body to pieces, yea, and all the torments which the devil can invent come upon me, so I may but attain to be with Jesus Christ."*

2. Justin Martyr was a Samaritan by birth, and educated a pagan. Being addicted to study, and thirsting for knowledge, he became eminent in all the learning of those times; and, in

* Cave's Lives of the Fathers.—Life of Ignatius.

vain, sought truth and happiness among all the sects of the philosophers. Lamenting his want of success, in a solitary walk by the sea-side, he met an aged stranger, with whom he entered into discourse, and by whom he was recommended to seek God, and truth, and happiness, in Christianity. In this he was induced, by considering the pious tranquillity and lively hope enjoyed and manifested by the disciples of Jesus Christ. He found the light of truth, and the way of salvation; but retained the habit and title of a philosopher, while he devoted himself, with active zeal, to serve the cause of the Saviour. He appears to have possessed sterling piety, and enlarged benevolence of heart. He wrote several apologies for the Christians, and for the doctrine of eternal life by faith in Jesus Christ. For the alleged crime of being a Christian, he suffered martyrdom at Rome, A. D. 163, by order of the prefect Rusticus, and in his triumphant death, he brought honour to the cause of the Redeemer.*

3. Polycarp was born in the reign of Nero, and educated by a Christian lady. He is supposed to have been a disciple of the apostle John. He succeeded Bucolus in the pastoral office at Smyrna, and laboured with persevering zeal to preserve the purity of doctrine, and to advance the knowledge of Christ among the people. He was called to the honour of martyrdom A. D. 167. Being brought before the proconsul, he said, "Swear by the genius of Caesar.—Reproach Christ, and I will release thee." To whom Polycarp meekly replied, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never wronged me, and how can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me?" He was ordered for execution; and being tied to the stake, he commended his soul to his heavenly Father, in a devout prayer, which closes as follows: "O true and faithful God, I praise thee for all thy mercies, I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the eternal High Priest, thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, with whom, to thyself, and to the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and for ever. Amen."† Twelve other martyrs suffered with Polycarp.

* Cave's Lives of the Fathers.—Life of Justin.

† Ibid.—Life of Polycarp.

4. Quadratus was a native of Athens, and received a learned education. He is said to have been converted to Christ by the ministry of the apostles. On the martyrdom of Publius, bishop of the Athenian Christians, Quadratus was chosen to be their pastor. Under his zealous ministry, a remarkable revival of religion took place in the church of Athens. He wrote an apology for the Christians, and presented it to the emperor Adrian, by which his fury was a little moderated. Quadratus was nevertheless persecuted and banished from Athens; but the extent of his sufferings, and the time of his martyrdom, are not accurately known. In the apology of Quadratus, he says, that some of those who had been miraculously healed by Christ were living in his time.

5. Pothinus was sent by Polycarp as a missionary to France, where his ministry was blessed to the conversion of many. He settled as pastor of the church at Lyons, where he laboured for many years. He fell a sacrifice to the rage of his enemies, at the age of ninety years, A. D. 171, testifying the glory of the gospel of salvation by Christ Jesus.

6. Irenæus succeeded Pothinus. He had been privileged to attend the ministry of Polycarp; by whom he was sent into France, to carry forward the work of evangelizing the Gauls. He learned their barbarous language, became assistant to the aged bishop, and, after the martyrdom of Pothinus, he succeeded to the pastoral office. Irenæus was a sincere lover of the souls of men; in labouring to promote which, he thought no danger or difficulties too great. He vigorously opposed the numerous heresies of his time. Florinus had, with him, attended the ministry of Polycarp, but had departed from the faith: to whom, in a letter, referring to the things they had heard from that venerable man, he says, "These things, through the mercy of God, I heard with seriousness: I wrote them not on paper, but on my heart; and ever since, through the grace of God, I have had a genuine remembrance of them, and can witness before God, that if that blessed apostolic presbyter had heard some of the doctrines which are now maintained, he would have cried out, and stopped his ears, and in his usual manner have said, O good God! to what times hast thou reserved me?" Irenæus, with many other Chris-

tians, was led to the summit of a hill, where they were offered life on condition of embracing idols; but they refusing, were crucified!

The persecutions of the church in the second century were distinguished by all the barbarities of the former. As there are reckoned ten general persecutions in the early ages of the church, the third commenced under Trajan, at the opening of the century, and continued several years. The fourth was under Marcus Antoninus, who began to reign A. D. 161. As to the general character of these emperors, Trajan, and Pliny, one of his nobles, are renowned for their wisdom, politeness, and justice. Antoninus is celebrated for his moral virtues, and is often called “the Philosopher,—the good Emperor.” Mr. Milner says, “ During all his reign, which continued nineteen years, he was an implacable persecutor of the Christians: and this not from mere ignorance of their moral character. He knew them, yet hated them, and showed them no mercy. He allowed and encouraged the most barbarous treatment of their persons, and was yet a person of great humanity of temper. If we except that of Nero, there was no reign under which the Christians were more injuriously and cruelly treated, than under that of the wise and virtuous Marcus Antoninus.” It has often been a subject of astonishment, that princes of such wisdom and moderation could be induced to persecute and murder their innocent subjects; but, influenced by the philosophic pride of their hearts, they hated the humbling doctrine of salvation by grace through Jesus Christ, in which they afforded an illustration of Scripture testimony, “ The carnal mind is enmity against God.”

Besides the celebrated men already mentioned, there were several martyrs of eminence, especially among the confessors in France, at Lyons and Vienne. Among these are noted Sanctus, a deacon of Vienne, and Maturus, a member of that church; Attalus, a pillar of the church at Pergamus; Vettius Epagathus, a young nobleman; Alexander, a physician, and Epiodius, his friend; with Blandina, a lady of rank. The various modes of lingering torture, which the diabolical cruelty of the executioners exercised upon these witnesses for Christ, in hanging, roasting, and exposing them to savage

beasts, were exceeded only by the divine consolation which filled their believing minds, and led them to utter their joys in the most edifying expressions.

It is to be lamented, however, that the doctrine of Christ was not preserved altogether in its purity. Several philosophic refinements were in this century added to Christianity ; though the principle doctrines of the gospel were generally maintained in all the churches. Mr. Milner says, “ True Christians in those times carefully separated themselves from heretics : they beheld their views with horror : they stuck close to Christ. His Godhead, manhood, and priesthood, were inestimably precious in their eyes. They could not allow those to be Christians at all who denied the fundamentals.”

There was a departure, also, from the apostolical simplicity of the church in this century. The original independency of each congregation, and the privileges of the people as managers of their own affairs, were in a great measure destroyed. For the bishops, as delegates from the several churches, now first meeting in synods, to deliberate upon their common interests, imperceptibly extended the limits of their authority ; turned their influence into dominion, and their counsels into laws : and some began to assert, that Christ had empowered them, as a superior order of ministers in his church, to prescribe to his people authoritative rules of faith and manners. At the close of the century, Victor, bishop of the church at Rome, conducted himself with a turbulent haughtiness, and excommunicated the Christians in Asia, because they commemorated the resurrection of Christ on a day which he did not approve ! The love of pre-eminence, in many of the bishops of the second century, led them to impose upon the simplicity of the people. Mosheim remarks, “ The bishops, by an innocent allusion to the Jewish manner of speaking, had been called ‘ chief-priests ; ’ the elders or presbyters had received the title of ‘ priests,’ and the deacons that of ‘ Levites.’ But in a little time these titles were abused by an aspiring clergy, who thought proper to claim the same rank and station, the same rights and privileges, that were conferred with those titles upon the ministers of religion under the Mosaic dispensation. Hence the rise of tithes, first-fruits, splendid garments, and

many other circumstances of external grandeur, by which ecclesiastics were eminently distinguished."

In like manner, the public worship did not continue to be conducted with its primitive simplicity : for, as the orders of ministers in the larger churches began to be increased, in imitation of the Levitical system, many unscriptural ceremonies were added ; which, although pleasing to the more ignorant of the people, disfigured the beauty of evangelical order, and injured the interests of rational and solid piety. This increase of unwarranted ceremonies was the natural and necessary consequence of adopting the sacerdotal orders from the Levitical institutions. We perceive that something of this kind commenced even in the apostles' days ; and they now laboured to accommodate the services of the gospel to the prejudices of the Jews, and also of the pagans : the latter having called the Christians Atheists, because they had no ceremonial pomp in their mode of worship. Great alterations were made in the ordinance of baptism : it began now to be administered only twice a year, after various ceremonies in preparation, and in some cases by washing the whole body. The person baptized received, at the same time, the sign of the cross ; they were anointed, confirmed by imposition of hands, and received milk and honey at the close of the service. Various fasts and festivals were appointed, and the custom of praying towards the east was introduced.

In consequence of originating these numerous ceremonies, various new heresies arose ; and we have, therefore, long lists of those who were considered heretical teachers in the second century. The errors of the Ebionites were revived, and the false doctrines related chiefly to the person of Christ, justification before God, and the influences of the Holy Spirit. It may be remarked, that in the latter end of this century, the first opposition to the baptism of infants, of which we have any account, was made by Tertullian. He objects that their baptism was useless, not that it was unscriptural.

That genuine godliness flourished in many churches of whom we have no account or information, cannot in the least be doubted. The number of the martyrs, and their pious correspondence and confessions, show that there was a great

multitude who truly feared God, and sincerely loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour by a holy and virtuous life. Yet many of the churches had declined, in a considerable degree, from the spirituality of mind prevailing in the former century ; as is evident by the addition of various pagan ceremonies to the Christian forms of worship, and by the mixture of several philosophic notions with the pure gospel of Christ.

It may be further necessary to mention the angry controversy which disturbed the churches in this century, relating to the time of keeping Easter. Mr. Milner remarks on this affair, “ The controversy respecting the proper time of the observation of Easter, which had been amicably adjusted between Polycarp of Smyrna, and Anicetus of Rome, who had agreed to differ, was unhappily revived towards the close of this century. Synods were held concerning it ; and a uniformity was attempted in vain throughout the church. Victor of Rome, with much arrogance and temerity, as if he had felt the very soul of the future Papacy formed in himself, inveighed against the Asiatic churches, and pronounced them excommunicated persons.”

CHAPTER XI.

CENTURY III.

Progress of Christianity in the third century—Condition of the church under twenty-five emperors—Eminent ministers—Tertullian—Pantænus—Clemens—Origen—Gregory Thaumaturgus—Pious Frauds.

THE boundaries of the church were greatly extended in the third century, though the information supplied to us is far from satisfactory. An Arabian prince, having heard of the fame of Origen of Alexandria, invited him to instruct him in the doctrines of the gospel ; and he, together with his wandering tribe, embraced the Christian faith.

The Goths, a fierce people of Mysia and Thrace, put off, in a great measure, their ferocious habits, by receiving the gospel of Christ by the ministry of several devoted missionaries from Asia.

France, by the mission of Dionysius, Gatian, Trophimus, Paul, Saturninus, Martial, and Stremonius, was blessed with the word of salvation; and besides the good effected at Vienne and Lyons, where the gospel had before been enjoyed, churches were gathered at Tours, Arles, Narbonne, and Paris; and by their means the light of divine truth opened through a great part of the whole country.

Germany was favoured with a holy band of missionaries; among whom were Eucharius, Valerius, Maternus, and Clemens. The labours of these zealous men originated churches at Cologne, Treves, Metz, and other places.

Various was the condition of the church in this century. Rome had passed the zenith of its glory, and it was now sunk in luxurious and bloody licentiousness. Military enthusiasts frequently fought in choosing a master, whom they shortly after assassinated; so that there were no less than twenty-five emperors in the course of the third century.

Amid such frequent changes the privileges of the Christians increased, especially as some of the emperors were favourable to them; while others were too much sunk in sensuality to care any thing about their principles. In the army, at court, and among all orders of the people, there was a considerable number of Christians, who lived entirely unmolested; and under most of the emperors, religion was no obstacle to preferment. They had, in many places, buildings set apart for divine worship, in which they assembled with the knowledge of the magistrates and of the emperors.

In the third century there were several eminent leaders among the Christians; among whom were,

1. Tertullian, presbyter at Carthage: he was brought up a pagan; but being convinced of his errors, he embraced the doctrine of Christ, and became one of its most able and zealous defenders. He adhered to the most rigid customs observed among the Christians, practising the severest self-denial; but not without a mixture of superstition. Though not the most discriminating in his theology, Tertullian appears to have been a man of sincere piety, and a vigorous opposer of the growing ambition of the bishops. His famous apology for the Christians

contains many beautiful passages, from which we learn something of its author's disposition, and of the manners of the believers in that age. He says, "We pray for the safety of the emperors to the eternal God, whom emperors themselves would desire to be propitious to them, above all others who are called gods. We pray, looking up to heaven with out-stretched hands, because they are harmless; with naked heads, because they are not ashamed; without a prompter, because we pray from the heart. Thus then let the claws of wild beasts pierce us, or their feet trample upon us, while our hands are stretched out to God: let crosses suspend us,—let fires consume us,—let swords pierce our breasts,—a praying Christian is in a frame for enduring any thing. We are dead to all ideas of worldly honour and dignity: nothing is more foreign to us than political concerns: the world is our republic. We are a body united in one bond of religion, discipline, and hope. We meet in our assemblies for prayer. We are compelled to have recourse to the divine oracles for caution and recollection on all occasions. We nourish our faith by the Word of God. Those who preside among us are elderly persons, not distinguished for opulence, but worthiness of character. Every one pays something to the public chest once a month, or when he pleases, and according to his ability and inclination; for there is no compulsion. These gifts are, as it were, the deposits of piety. Hence we relieve and bury the needy, support orphans and decrepid persons, those who, for the Word of God, are condemned to the mines or imprisonment. This very charity of ours has caused us to be noticed by some: 'See,' say they, 'how these Christians love one another!'" Tertullian is supposed to have died a martyr, A. D. 216 or 220.

2. Pantaenus was a Sicilian, and educated in the philosophy of the Stoics. After he had embraced Christianity, he is said to have made such proficiency in divine knowledge, that he was appointed master of the catechetical school at Alexandria, established for the purpose of training up young men in the doctrines of Christ, with a view to the Christian ministry. For ten years he discharged the duties of his office with diligence and success, and then went as a missionary

into Arabia, Ethiopia, Persia, and India, for several years. He lived to return to Alexandria, where he died, about A. D. 216.

3. Clemens, called Alexandrinus, is celebrated by Christian writers of that age, as a man who had thoroughly investigated the doctrines of the sects of philosophers ; but being dissatisfied with them, he embraced the gospel as the doctrine of salvation. He studied Christianity under many eminent teachers, till he became a pupil and an assistant of Pantænus. He succeeded his master as president of the school, and zealously laboured to convert the pagans to the faith of Christ. From the little that we can learn of these teachers, it appears that both Pantænus and Clemens were truly pious men : but it is supposed they were somewhat drawn aside from the simplicity of the gospel, by attempting to incorporate part of their former philosophic notions with the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

4. Origen was a native of Alexandria. His father Leonidas was a man of rank and learning, a Christian, and a martyr for Christ. He trained his son with pious care, instructing him in the several departments of human learning, and directed his studies in the Holy Scriptures from his childhood. His progress in the various branches of knowledge was surprising. At the age of seventeen Origen lost his father, in a dreadful persecution which arose at Alexandria. Great numbers of Christians fell a sacrifice to the malignity of their pagan enemies at this time ; and Origen panted for the honour, taking opportunities of being apprehended. To prevent the fatal effects of his imprudent zeal, his mother was necessitated to hide his clothes, that shame might confine him at home. As he was not allowed to visit his father in prison, before his execution, he wrote a letter encouraging his faith in the Saviour, and saying, “ Father, faint not, and be not disengaged on our account.”

In the following year, Origen was appointed master in the theological school of Alexandria, in which he supported the opinion entertained of him ; for thousands attended his lectures, by which many were prepared even for the honours of martyrdom. His growing reputation excited the jealousy of Demetrius, his bishop, who meanly injured him in various

ways, and after his ordination at Cesarea, while on a mission to Achaia, by the bishops of Jerusalem and Cesarea, excommunicated him, and procured his deposition and banishment from Alexandria. He then set up an academy at Cesarea, which was attended by many illustrious persons. His labours were almost incredible, and his writings numerous. Being a perfect Hebrew scholar, he composed an edition of the Old Testament, in which the text was written both in Hebrew and Greek characters; and six Greek versions in parallel columns. This work, although composed of eight copies of the Old Testament, was called *Hexapla*, because it contained six Greek versions. But this voluminous work was too expensive and cumbersome for general use: Origen then composed another, containing only the four versions of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Septuagint; which was consequently called the *Tetrapla*. But, except a few fragments, these great works are both lost. Besides these, Origen made commentaries upon several parts of the Scriptures. As a theological lecturer, his usefulness appears to have been considerable, though he was fanciful in some of his interpretations. He is said to have had "a mighty regard to the glory of God, and the good of souls, whose happiness he studied by all ways to promote, and thought nothing hard, nothing servile, that he might advance them." He attended the martyrs in their sufferings, to minister to them the consolations of the gospel; and exposed himself to frequent and dreadful torments, which his enemies invented against him, especially at Tyre: yet nothing could shake his faith in Christ, or his pious constancy in publishing the doctrine of his salvation. He was released from a most barbarous imprisonment on the death of the emperor Decius, and died A. D. 254, aged sixty-nine years.

5. Cyprian was descended from a noble family, and was himself a senator. His education was suited to his station, and he publicly taught rhetoric at Carthage with great reputation. "At this time he lived in great pomp and plenty, in honour and power; his garb splendid, his retinue stately; never going abroad but he was thronged with a crowd of clients and followers." He frequently employed his eminent talents in defence of the superstitions and idolatries of pa-

ganism; but by Cecilius, one of the ministers of Christ at Carthage, he was led to embrace the gospel. His progress in divine knowledge was astonishing. He consigned over all his property for the use of the poor, and consecrated himself to the service of his Saviour. On the decease of Donatus, bishop of Carthage, Cyprian was unanimously chosen to succeed him. He reluctantly accepted the responsible office, reformed a multitude of abuses, and applied himself zealously to the discharge of his ministry. Persecution raging, his pagan fellow-citizens demanded his life, and Cyprian withdrew from the storm. In his retirement, he carried on an extensive religious correspondence, for the encouragement of believers in their profession of the gospel. He was allowed to return, and he resumed his reformation and his ministry with unabated vigour. His active and useful labours were, however, soon terminated by the honour of martyrdom, A. D. 258. Cyprian is justly celebrated as one of the most eminent of the early Fathers. His conversion to Christianity was heartfelt and genuine ; his religion was deep and spiritual ; and his ministry was lively and searching. His talents were of the highest order ; and, being sanctified by the grace of Christ, his usefulness was great and extensive. Cyprian was a character of extraordinary excellence ; but from his writings he appears to have been filled with the prevailing notions of episcopal prelacy, though he possessed too much personal religion to prefer his claims to the serious injury of the church.

6. Gregory, surnamed Thaumaturgus, or The Wonder-worker, was a native of Neocesarea. He was educated an idolater, and was much devoted to the study of philosophy. The fame of Origen reaching his ears, he placed himself under his tuition for five years. He so greatly advanced in Christian knowledge, that Origen highly commended his improvement ; observing, that his eminent parts were capable of shining in any profession. Gregory entertained the sincerest affection for his tutor, and in a public oration laments his leaving of Origen, as being like banishment from paradise. In a letter, Origen exhorted him to pray for the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and to apply his knowledge to the promotion of Christianity. Phedimus, bishop of Amasea, lamenting the

idolatry and corruption of Neocesarea, at length induced Gregory to enter upon the work of the Christian ministry in his native place. He laboured with surprising success in the conversion of his idolatrous fellow-citizens. It is said that Gregory, when near death, caused inquiry to be made throughout the city and neighbourhood, whether any were still strangers to the faith of Christ; and, being told there were *seventeen*, he sighed, and lifting his eyes to heaven, appealed to God how much it troubled him that any should yet remain ignorant of Jesus Christ. At the same time, he acknowledged it to be a singular mercy, which demanded his gratitude, that he should leave but *seventeen* idolaters to his successors, when he could find but that number of Christians when himself entered upon his work in that place. The miracles of Gregory are reported upon very dubious evidence; some of them are exceedingly ridiculous, and many of them have all the marks of mere superstition and credulity. He died A. D. 265.

“Pious frauds,” or false miracles, were common in this age: they were practised even in the second century by several teachers; but, to the dishonour of religion, they now were publicly defended, even by some good men, provided they were employed with a design to advance the cause of Christianity.

CHAPTER XII.

CENTURY III—(Continued.)

Persecutions—Martyrs—Apostles—Novatian—Heresies—Claims of the Clergy
—Addition of ceremonies—Declension of religion—Decision respecting baptism—Monachism.

THE persecutions of the third century were many, and the manner of them was most grievous. There are reckoned ten General Pagan Persecutions: the Fifth began A. D. 203, under the emperor Severus, who had been, some years before, in a subordinate station, the bitter tormentor of the Christians at Lyons. The Sixth, began with the reign of Maximin, A. D. 235. The Seventh, the most destructive of any previously known,

began with Decius, A. D. 250. The Eighth, under Valerian, A. D. 257. The Ninth, under Aurelian, A. D. 274.

The number of those who suffered for Christ, in these persecutions, was incredible. It would require volumes to record the shocking cruelties which were exercised upon the martyred Christians, or the divine consolations with which they were evidently sustained; or to do justice to their elevated piety and excellency of character: at the same time, it appears indispensable to notice some of their lives and sufferings. In the Fifth Persecution:—

Besides Leonidas, the father of Origen, many Christians suffered at Alexandria. Serenus, Heraclides, Heron, another Serenus, and Plutarch, pupil of Origen, were beheaded. Rhais, a female candidate for Christian ordinances, after having scalding pitch poured on her whole body, was committed to the flames. In like manner, a beautiful young lady, named Patamiena, and her mother Marcella, suffered. Basilides, who conducted the execution, was so affected with their constant faith and joyful hope, that he declared himself a Christian, and was beheaded.

At Carthage, twelve persons were accused before the pro-consul, as Christians; three of whom were Speratus, Nazzal, and Cittin; and three women, Donata, Secunda, and Vestina. All endeavours on the part of the judge to prevail on them to abjure their faith were unavailing. Three days were allowed them to reflect on their danger; when, continuing steadfast, they were ordered to be executed. Together on their knees, having given thanks to God their Saviour, they were beheaded.

In the Sixth Persecution:—

Anterus, bishop of Rome, is believed to have died a martyr, A. D. 236. Three Roman senators, Pammachius, Simplicius, and Quintius, with their families, were beheaded for the faith of Christ. Great numbers were slain without trial, and buried in pits, fifty or sixty together.

In France, among others, Vivarius and Androlus, missionaries, were martyred at Lyons.

At Carthage, the most affecting case was that of four young candidates for communion, Revocatus and Felicitas, slaves of

the same master, Saturninus and Secondulus, and Perpetua, a married lady of quality. After they had suffered in prison, the father of Perpetua, a pagan, used every possible argument, with tears, to prevail on her to relinquish her faith, but in vain; although she had an infant at the breast. The new-born daughter of Felicitas was delivered to a Christian woman to nurse as her own. Perpetua and Felicitas were stripped, and being put into a net, were exposed to an enraged cow, for the gratification of the populace in the amphitheatre. Felicitas sang a hymn for joy, and when wounded, exhorted her brother, and Rusticus, a friend, to stand faithful in their Christian profession. A gladiator terminated their sufferings with his sword, and their spirits were thus dismissed to the bliss of their Saviour.

In the Seventh Persecution :—

Fabianus, bishop of Rome, was one of the first victims of the emperor Decius.

At Antioch, Babylas the bishop, and great numbers were put to death with every species of insult and torment. One example may suffice: one of the sufferers, having endured the rack and burning plates, was ordered by the judge to be rubbed all over with honey, and then to be exposed to the mid-day sun, lying on his back, with his hands tied behind him. Stung with insects, he died.

In the Eighth Persecution :—

Sextus, bishop of Rome, with his six deacons, was put to death for the faith. Lawrence, the senior deacon, was required to give an account of the treasure of the church. At his desire, three days were allowed him, when he presented a number of aged poor, the pensioners on the bounty of the church, to the magistrate, saying, “These are the precious treasure of the church: these are treasure indeed, in whom the faith of Christ reigns,—in whom Jesus Christ hath his mansion place.” Enraged to fury at the deacon, the magistrate ordered him to be beaten with rods, his limbs dislocated, to be pinched with fiery tongs, and, after various tortures, to be chained upon an iron grate, and to be roasted to death. The martyr endured the agony with constancy, patience, and triumph.

In Spain, Fructuosus, bishop of Tarragonia, with his two

deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, witnessed a good confession, in shedding their blood for Christ. Being bound together, they were placed in the fire, which loosing their bonds, they praised the living God, to the admiration of the bystanders, and commended their souls to their Saviour.

In the Ninth Persecution:—

At Smyrna, Pionius, a venerable member of the church, in expectation of being seized, put a chain about his neck, and caused his sister Sabina, and Asclepiades, a pious man, to do the same. Polemon, keeper of the idol temple, with the magistrates, came to them in vain, to induce them to recant. Sabina had before been put in irons, and banished into the mountains by her pagan mistress. To be compelled to sacrifice, they were dragged to the temple, where they saw their wretched bishop Endemon, who had complied. All attempts to shake their constancy were vain. In going to the place of execution, Pionius thanked God, who had preserved him faithful. He was nailed to the wood, when the officer said to him, “Change your mind, and the nails shall be taken out.” To which Pionius replied, “I have felt them;” and in prayer said, “I hasten, O Lord, that I may the sooner be a partaker of the resurrection.” A fire was kindled, in which he expired, saying, “Amen, Lord, receive my soul.”

At Carthage, about three hundred were suffocated in a lime-kiln, rather than they would offer incense to Jupiter, which was the condition proposed.

At Cesarea, in Cappadocia, Cyril, a boy, was persecuted and driven from home by his father. The magistrate promised to reconcile him to his father, and secure the estate for him, provided he would abandon Christianity. The child replied, “I rejoice to bear reproaches: God will receive me. I am not sorry that I am expelled out of our house: I shall have a better mansion: I fear not death, because it will introduce me to a better life.” The judge ordered him to be led to the fire; and, in the sight of it, for remonstrance to be used with him: but he said, “Your fire and your sword are insignificant. I go to a better house: I go to more excellent riches: dispatch me presently, that I may enjoy them.” To the weeping spectators he said, “You should rather rejoice in conducting me to

punishment. You know not what city I am going to inhabit, nor what is my hope." His testimony in death was the admiration of the whole city.

It may well be supposed, that the fiery persecutions which the Christians endured would occasion those who were not sincere to abandon their profession. Such was the case in numerous instances. Many became affecting examples of apostacy; while others, who were weak in the faith, to save their lives, complied with the rites of idolatry. Penetrated with guilt, and stung with remorse, many of them returned to their pastors, with supplications to be restored to communion with the faithful. Some of the bishops would not admit them on any terms. Others required one, two, or three years' previous probation; but others, again, allowed them to retake their station on very easy terms, by which a serious and bitter controversy arose.

Novatian appears to have been one of the most active in this dispute; and from his name a considerable body were called Novatians. By some modern historians, they are called the First Dissenters; and on this account many evil things have been charged upon them. They were also called *Cathari*, or Puritans, because of their professedly maintaining a purer discipline in their churches; and all admit that they were orthodox in the doctrines of faith. It is difficult to ascertain how far this body prevailed. We read of churches of this denomination at Rome, Carthage, Nice, Nicomedia, and other places, especially in the following century. Dr. Lardner says, "The vast extent of this sect is manifest, from the names of the authors who have mentioned them, or written against them, and from the several parts of the Roman empire in which they were found."

Dr. Mosheim states, "This sect cannot be charged with having corrupted the doctrines of Christianity by their opinions. Novatian, a proselyte of Rome, a man of uncommon learning and eloquence, but of an austere and rigid character, entertained the most unfavourable sentiments of those who had been separated from the church. He indulged his inclination to severity so far, as to deny that such as had fallen into the commission of grievous transgressions, especially those who had

apostatized from the faith, under the persecution set on foot by Decius, were to be again received into the church. They did not pretend that such were excluded from all possibility or hope of salvation. They considered the Christian church as a society where virtue and innocence reigned universally, and none of whose members, from their entrance into it, had defiled themselves with any crime; and, in consequence, they looked upon every society, which re-admitted heinous offenders to its communion, unworthy of the title of a true Christian church."

Novatian was chosen bishop by those who held his opinions at Rome; but the other more lax party being strongest, Cornelius pronounced a sentence of excommunication against Novatian, as a schismatic. Cyprian, in a letter, expressed his approbation of this sentence, on account of Novatus, one of his presbyters, having united with Novatian. Dr. Hawies, in his "Impartial Church History," says, "The reply of Cornelius to the bishop of Carthage bears an acrimony, an insolence, and abuse, that speak as little in favour of the man who could receive it with complacence, as of him who could *indite* it in the bitterness of his heart; and they must be sad Christians indeed whose state I should not prefer to the bishop's, who could write these letters. Novatian, by his revilers, is admitted to be a man of genius, learning, and eloquence. His moral character was unimpeachable. However, it required singular excellence to maintain himself and his congregation against the weight of power and influence which were against him. One of the best, clearest, and most precise treatises which antiquity can produce, on the Triune God, comes from his pen. He states distinctly, that 'the Holy Ghost is the author of regeneration—the pledge of the promised inheritance—the hand-writing of eternal salvation—who makes us the temple of God and his abode—who intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered—our advocate and defender—dwelling in us—and sanctifying us for immortality,' &c. When I hear Cyprian anathematizing such a man, I can only say, I would rather be under the curses with Novatian, than utter them with Cyprian."

Cyprian died a martyr for Christ! Novatian died a martyr for Christ! Cornelius died in prison, a confessor of Christ!

On these good, but imperfect men, Dr. Hawies makes the following beautiful reflections : " Ah, that great men, good men, confessors, martyrs, should quarrel, and not be willing to bear and forbear ! If one is our Master, even Christ, to him let us be content to be responsible ; follow the best dictates of our conscience according to our views of God's word, and be happy to indulge our brethren with the same liberty. Cyprian and Novatian, at the right hand of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, must be ashamed of their hard spirit, and their harsh speeches. It is a mercy for us all, that we have such a compassionate High Priest, who knows how to pity our infirmities, and to pardon our iniquities. I am the longer on this point, because Mr. Milner calls these the first Dissenters from the church, not a tittle of which I can perceive ; for Novatian was a bishop as truly chosen and ordained, from any thing which appears, as Cornelius."*

The heresies of the former century were cherished in this, under various modifications ; but the principal heresies of this age were Manes and Sabellius. Manes, the founder of the Manicheans, was one of the Persian Magi, who pretended to embrace the gospel, with which he endeavoured to incorporate his Magian absurdities, of two gods, one good and the other evil. Sabellius was an Egyptian philosopher, who professed Christianity, and taught that there is only one Person in the Godhead. Porphyry, a philosopher, and one of the greatest enemies of Christianity, wrote against its doctrines in this century.

The clergy continued their unscriptural claims, maintained their various dignities, and greatly increased them, in the third century. Ecclesiastical government degenerated towards the form of a religious monarchy, and the people were, in most instances, excluded from all share in the management of their own affairs. Mosheim says, " The bishops assumed in many places a princely authority, particularly those who presided over the most opulent assemblies. They appropriated to their evangelical function the splendid ensigns of temporal majesty. A throne, surrounded with ministers, exalted above his equals

* Impartial History, vol. i. p. 240, 241, 247.

the servant of the meek and humble Jesus, and sumptuous garments dazzled the eyes and the minds of the multitude into an ignorant veneration for their arrogated authority. The example of the bishops was ambitiously imitated by the presbyters; who, neglecting the sacred duties of their station, abandoned themselves to the indolence and delicacy of an effeminate and luxurious life. When the honours and privileges of the bishops and presbyters were augmented, the deacons also began to extend their ambitious views, and to despise those lower functions and employments which they had hitherto exercised with such humility and zeal; and the effects of a corrupt ambition were spread through every rank of the sacred order.”* Besides the ranks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, a long list of lesser orders of ministers was created, in the third century, on account of the increasing ceremonies which had been adopted in imitation of the heathen mysteries. Various forms of prayer and consecration, it is believed, were prepared to be read with those ceremonies,—the table of the Lord was converted into an altar,—wax tapers and incense were burnt upon them, and much solemn pomp attended the worship, especially in celebrating the Lord’s Supper. Baptism was preceded by a terrifying exorcism, and tasting milk and honey, which was succeeded by the candidate returning home, adorned with a crown and white garments.

The newly created orders of ministers, with the alterations from the simplicity of the gospel institutions, were necessarily followed by a train of customs which disfigured and dishonoured the character of our holy religion. For though there were some who exhibited to the world illustrious examples of primitive, apostolical Christianity and holiness, the most respectable writers of that age, even Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, in the middle of the century, and others, declare that many of the prelates were sunk in luxury and voluptuousness, puffed up with vanity, inflamed with a spirit of discord, and addicted to disgraceful practices. By many bishops, however, with their people, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity were firmly held, and evidently enjoyed as the saving truths of

* Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 267.

God. These were exemplified in the faith, and resignation, and holy triumph of the martyrs ; and the several persecutions were beneficial, in opposing a check to the progress of superstition, and in purifying the declining churches.

Among other things worthy to be noticed in the third century, we may mention the two following facts. First, the unanimous decision of the sixty-six bishops, on the propriety of baptizing children at any age. The bishops were assembled at Carthage, A. D. 253, Cyprian being president. It was not questioned whether infant baptism were commonly practised, or whether it were right, and a divine institution : no doubt appears to have been in existence in the mind of any of them on those points ; but it had been inquired, whether it were proper to baptize them earlier than at eight days old, the age at which the Hebrew children were circumcised. The second fact to be noticed is, the origin of Christian monachism, with Paul, the Egyptian hermit. He was driven into the deserts by the baseness of an avaricious sister and her husband, who sought his estate, in the time of the Decian persecution : they threatened to inform against him as a Christian. He remained in his solitude for ninety years, and acquired great fame by this singular expression of his piety, and his example soon began to be imitated. He lived to be one hundred and thirteen years of age.

BOOK FOURTH.

CHAPTER I.

CENTURY IV.

Diocletian and his colleagues—Ten years' persecutions—Martyrs—St. Alban—Romanus—Phileas—St. Sebastian—Theban Legion—Theodosia—Eulalia—Julitta—Constantine, the emperor, converted.

THE history of the church in the fourth century is eminently remarkable : for, only a few years after its commencement,

Christianity was adopted as the religion of the Roman emperors!

At the beginning of the fourth century, the empire was governed by Diocletian, who united with him in the sovereign power, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius; under whom, at this period, the Christians enjoyed peace. Their numbers so greatly increasing, Diocletian, ignorant of their principles, and dreading their opposition to his tyranny, was induced to issue an edict against them, A. D. 303, and the persecution became general. How many fell a sacrifice to the fury and malice of their enemies, we cannot ascertain; but it is supposed that this persecution was far more destructive than any of the former. Galerius, the son-in-law of Diocletian, was its chief instigator; excited by his bigoted pagan mother, who is represented as a monster of savage ferocity. It began at Nicomedia, where Diocletian kept his court. The licentious soldiers entered the Christian place of worship, seized the sacred writings, and, setting fire to the building, levelled it with the ground. The same thing was ordered to be done in all parts of the empire; and many of the deacons and ministers, to save their lives, delivered up the sacred books to the magistrates. Others refusing were most cruelly tortured. By new edicts, the governors of provinces and magistrates were required utterly to destroy the Christians, wherever they could be found.

The persecution continued ten years; and such was the sacrifice of lives, that two triumphal pillars were erected in Spain, as the pagans believed, for monuments of the entire destruction of Christianity. Every species of cruelty, horrible and indecent beyond all the power of language to describe, was employed against the disciples of Christ. The executioners were not satisfied to murder the Christians singly; houses were filled with them, and the whole burnt to ashes; and large companies of them, fifty or sixty, were tied together with ropes, and in droves were hurried into the sea! Although every conceivable mode of torture that ingenious malignity could imagine was employed, and notwithstanding many apostates, the number of the martyrs was incredible.

Brief notices must be given of some of the more eminent martyrs in the Diocletian persecution; but the account must

be limited to a very few of different countries, as a specimen of the sufferings and triumphs of the many ; of men, of women, and of whole families.

St. Alban, from whom the town of St. Albans is named, obtained the crown of martyrdom in the year A. D. 303. He had been seven years a soldier in the emperor's army ; but, returning to his native town, he entertained Amphibalus, a persecuted Welsh minister ; by whose doctrine and holy life he was converted to the faith of Christ. The magistrate sending to apprehend Amphibalus, Alban put on the habit of his host, and was taken. The governor demanding to know his family, he replied, " To what purpose do you inquire of my family ? If you would know my religion, I am a Christian." Then being asked his name, he said, " My parents named me Alban, and I worship the only true and living God, who created all things." He was immediately led away and beheaded, and, as is supposed, was the first on the list of British martyrs. Amphibalus also was thus made to glorify his Saviour, being first emboweled, and then stoned ! Romanus was a nobleman of Antioch, and a deacon of the church there. Being brought before the emperor, who threatened him with torments, he replied, " Thy sentence, O emperor, I joyfully embrace. I refuse not to be sacrificed for my brethren, and that by as cruel means as thou canst invent." The executioners observing to the captain, " This man is of noble parentage : it is not lawful to put a nobleman to a shameful death :" Romanus required no favour on account of his nobility, saying, " Not the blood of my progenitors, but Christian profession, makes me noble." He preached affectionately, to those around him, eternal life through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, receiving in return many wounds in his face. The martyr again said, " I thank thee, O captain, that thou hast opened unto me many mouths with which I may preach my Lord and Saviour Christ." Being reproached with the cross of Christ, he preached on the eternal divinity of Christ, his human nature, and atonement for sin by his death. After enduring the most cruel torments, and while led to execution, he said, " I appeal from thy tyranny, O judge unjust, unto the righteous throne of Christ, the upright Judge." A child of

seven years old is said to have been martyred with him, for confessing Christ.

The Egyptian Christians suffered in vast multitudes, sixty or eighty daily. Philoromus, a person of rank at Alexandria, suffered cheerfully for Christ. Phileas, a bishop in Thebais, a short time before his martyrdom, wrote to his church, in which he describes the tortures and the happy experience of the sufferers ; and among other good things he says, “The martyrs, fixing sincerely the eye of their mind on the supreme God, and cheerfully embracing death for the sake of godliness, held immovably their calling, knowing that our Lord Jesus Christ was made man for us, that he might cut down all sin, and might afford us the necessary preparatives of eternal life.”

St. Sebastian was a lieutenant-general in Domitian’s army in France. He encouraged many martyrs to constancy in their faith and hope, through which he was accused before the emperor as a Christian : he was ordered to be apprehended, and put to death ! Maximian is said to have put to death in France the whole Theban legion, consisting of six thousand six hundred and sixty soldiers, as they refused to destroy the Christians of those parts ; the captain Mauritius and his men confessing themselves Christians ! Felix, of Tiburia in Africa, being required to deliver up the Scriptures, refused, saying, “ I have them, but I will not part with them.” When condemned to be beheaded, he lifted up his voice to heaven, saying, “ I thank thee, O Lord, that I have lived fifty-six years, have kept my integrity, have preserved the gospel, and have preached the faith and truth. O my Lord Jesus Christ, the God of heaven and earth, I bow my head to thee, who livest to all eternity.”

Euplius, a martyr in Sicily, being asked, “ Why do you keep the Scriptures, forbidden by the emperor ? ” replied, “ Because I am a Christian : life eternal is in them : he that gives them up loses life eternal ! ”

Surprising courage was shown by the female martyrs, of whom there were many in the Domitian persecution.

Theodosia, a Tyrian young lady, not eighteen years of age, was put to death for owning and relieving some Christian prisoners, who were condemned to the mines in Egypt.

Eulalia, not thirteen years of age, was daughter of a nobleman of Emerita, in Portugal; refusing to sacrifice to idols, as she had embraced the gospel of Christ, she was put to death in the most barbarous manner. Standing before the magistrate, she cried out, "Would you know, O you unfortunate, what I am; behold, I am one of the Christians, an enemy to your devilish sacrifices: I spurn your idols under my feet; I confess God omnipotent with my heart and mouth." While she was being tormented, she praised God, saying, "Behold, O Lord, I will not forget thee: what a pleasant thing is it for them, O Christ, that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain to these high dignities!"

Julitta, a wealthy lady, lost all her property, it being seized by an avaricious deputy of the emperor, he declaring her an outlaw, being a Christian. On her seeking redress, he accused her as a Christian, and she was condemned. On hearing her sentence, she said, "Farewell life, welcome death: farewell riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, would I rather lose, than speak one wicked and blasphemous word against God, my Creator. I yield thee most hearty thanks, O my God, for this gift of grace, that I can contemn and despise this frail and transitory world, esteeming Christian profession above all treasures." To every question which was proposed to her afterwards, she answered, "I am the servant of Jesus Christ." Her relations and friends entreating her to abjure her faith, she refused; exhorting them in the most affectionate manner, she said, "Grow weary, my sisters, of your lives led in darkness, and be in love with my Christ, my God, my Redeemer, my Comforter, who is the true light of the world. Persuade yourselves, or rather may the Spirit of the living God persuade you, that there is a world to come, in which the worshippers of idols and devils shall be tormented perpetually, and the servants of the Most High God shall be eternally crowned." Saying these words, she embraced the fire, and fell asleep in the Lord.

The merciful providence of God terminated these shocking calamities, by removing their barbarous authors. Diocletian resigned the empire, A. D. 305, and poisoned himself, A. D. 312. Maximian, through fear, followed his example, and was

put to death by his own son-in-law. Galerius was smitten with an incurable disease, through which he lingered a whole year: his agonies of body were most dreadful, as he was devoured by vermin; and the torments of his guilty soul rendered him a terror to those around him. He died A. D. 311. Maximin, a new emperor, died in a manner equally shocking. Constantine, born in Britain, succeeded his father Constantius; and, embracing Christianity, which he had been taught by his mother, he gave peace to the persecuted disciples, A. D. 313.

It will be interesting and necessary to give some particulars concerning the early history and conversion of this royal defender of the church. Constantine the Great was not only a native of our country, but his mother is said to have been a British princess. His father died at York, and the army proclaimed him emperor: but Galerius refusing to admit him as his colleague, the dispute was to be settled by arms: the struggle terminated in favour of Constantine. When marching against Maxentius, the successor of Galerius, Constantine is said to have seen in the sky the figure of a cross, with an inscription, "In hoc vince," "By this overcome." The same vision, it is said, he saw in a dream, which being made known to the soldiers, they were inspired with invincible courage, and gained a decisive victory: after which, Constantine avowed himself a believer in Christianity. Whether Constantine the Great became a sincere believer on Jesus Christ to the salvation of his soul, is much doubted by many, as he chose for his religious instructor an Arian bishop, Eusebius of Cæsarea. His last days were tyrannical and oppressive, and he would not submit to baptism till on his death-bed, that, according to the prevailing notions of that time, his sins might be washed away by that ordinance!

CHAPTER II.

CENTURY IV—(Continued.)

Constantine patronizes Christianity—Increase of dignified clergy—the people excluded from choosing their ministers—Corruption of doctrine and manners—Pompous ceremonies—Origin of liturgies—Arianism—Sects—True church.

A NEW order of things arose in the church under the auspices of Constantine. For he employed all the resources of his genius, all the authority of his law, and all the engaging charms of his liberality, to propagate the forms of Christianity in every corner of the empire; abolishing pagan idolatry, and transferring the temples, with their ample revenues, to the services of the Christians. Theodosius the Great, at the close of the century, laboured perseveringly to confirm and complete what had been thus begun by Constantine. To effect this object, he published an edict, requiring uniformity with the Church of Rome in doctrine and ceremonies of worship.

What effect this accession of grandeur had upon the church, may be easily conceived. It cannot be doubted that vital godliness was possessed by many; yet it was accompanied with an immense increase of superstition, formality, and hypocrisy. The extravagant claims of the ambitious bishops were now confirmed, and the spiritual institution of Christ was transformed into a worldly system, modelled according to the civil government of the empire. The bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, were already regarded as superior to other prelates; having the title of Patriarch, to which was now added a fourth for Constantinople. In a regular gradation, patriarchs, exarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops, with numerous other priestly orders, were now either created or established. The bishop of Rome, surpassing all his brethren in opulence and splendour, was the first in rank, and was distinguished by a pre-eminence over all other prelates, and regarded as the supreme judge of all religious controversies.

These appointments were seriously prejudicial to the inter-

ests of genuine religion, and destroyed the simplicity and beauty of the churches of Jesus Christ, as exhibited in the New Testament. The bishops now excluded the people from all share in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs, and engrossed the rich possessions and revenues of the churches. Aspiring and irreligious men were everywhere seeking preferment to the lucrative offices in the church, and that by the most scandalous means. To such a height did their contests on these occasions arise, that at the election of Ursinus and Damasus, A. D. 366, by opposing parties, to the bishopric of Rome, the clerical adherents of Damasus being armed, one hundred and thirty-seven persons were killed in the church itself, besides many others on different days.* The bishops contended with each other, in the most shameful manner, concerning the extent of their respective jurisdictions: and imitated, in their manner of living, the arrogance, voluptuousness, and luxury, of magistrates and princes. On this account, a pagan prefect of Rome said, “ Make me bishop of Rome, and I will also be a Christian.”

The pagan idolatry, however, was not wholly destroyed. As no violence appears to have been used to abolish the ancient superstition, the college of augurs, and several eminent academies of the pagan philosophers, still remained; and some of the nobles considered themselves dignified by their consecration to the priesthood. Julian, nephew to Constantine the Great, and who had been educated in the profession of Christianity, apostatized, and became a powerful and subtle enemy to the Christians during his short reign. He resolved to falsify the predictions of Jesus Christ, and, in opposition to his declarations, to rebuild Jerusalem: “ but while the labourers were removing the rubbish, balls of fire, issuing out of the ground, with a dreadful noise, rendered the place inaccessible to the scorched workmen, and filled the spectators with terror and dismay.”

The peculiar doctrines of the gospel were lamentably obscured during the fourth century. The proper divinity and incarnation of Jesus Christ were, indeed, defended with much zeal and ability against the heretics: but the other distinguished

* Bower's History of the Popes—Damasus.

doctrines of salvation, as justification by faith in the atonement and righteousness of Christ, and sanctification of heart by the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, were deplorably neglected. Vital godliness declined in a corresponding degree, through the worldliness of the ministers, by the adoption of numerous heathen ceremonies, and by the cherishing of various errors adopted from the pagan philosophy.

Pious frauds were at this time generally practised, and with considerable success, in advancing the authority, and in increasing the wealth, of the church rulers : besides this practice, there were two erroneous and pernicious maxims maintained,—one was, “that it was an act of virtue to deceive the heathen by lying, when in that manner the interests of the church might be promoted.” This was destructive of the sound principles of morality, as laid down in the Scriptures. The other maxim was, “that errors in religion, when held and cherished, after ecclesiastical admonition, were punishable with corporal tortures.” This diabolical doctrine soon produced bloodshed in the church, under the direction of worldly and bigoted prelates, and in a manner almost as dreadful as had been the case while the pagans wasted the Christians.

The additions of rites and ceremonies, in the exercises of public worship, were exceedingly numerous in this age. St. Augustine, who was an eminent minister of Christ at the close of the fourth, and in part of the fifth century, declares, that in his time “they despised many of the commands of the sacred Scriptures, and that superstition had universally so prevailed, that if any one had touched the ground with his bare foot during the week in which he was baptized, he was more severely rebuked than if he had been drunk; and that the Christian religion, which God in his mercy would have to be free, and to consist of very few ceremonies, was become so loaded with servile burdens, that the condition of the Jews of old was much more tolerable than that of Christians : because the Jews had been subjected to a bondage of the law of God ; but that, in the place of this, Christians were brought under bondage to human inventions.” In the fourth century, the religion of the pagan Greeks and Romans differed very little in its external appearance from that of the Christians. They had both a most pompous and splendid

ritual, calculated to blind the imagination of the multitude. Gorgeous robes, tiaras, mitres, wax tapers, crosiers, processions, lustrations, images, gold and silver vases, and many such circumstances of pageantry, were to be seen equally in the heathen temples and in the Christian churches. Each bishop formed for himself, or adopted a plan of ceremonial worship, according to his own taste or interests : from which arose a variety of public liturgies. New ceremonies were added to the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; and the bread and wine, commemorating the body and blood of Christ, began to be regarded with a degree of adoration by the people.

Under Constantine magnificent churches were erected in every city, richly adorned with pictures and images, and resembling the pagan temples in form and furniture. Men of opulence were encouraged to build places for worship, to which, in conformity with the heathen customs, they were allowed the privilege of appointing the ministers: hence arose what is called *Church Patronage*. By this means many heretical and vicious persons were introduced to the performance of religious services in the Christian sanctuary.

It has been wondered how religious men could perform the duty of the Christian ministry : and, indeed, such were totally unqualified for the sacred office, according to the institution of Jesus Christ. But public worship, in populous places, at that time, was altogether a different thing, and consisting chiefly in ceremonies : preaching the gospel, and solemn prayer, were seriously neglected ; and, as many assumed the office of the Christian ministry who were incapable of such exercises, liturgies, or forms of devotion, were drawn up to be read, or repeated, by them, or chanted by their assistants. Such was the origin of liturgical forms, and "reading prayers," in the public worship of Christians.

That liturgies had not an earlier origin, is acknowledged by the learned and laborious ecclesiastical antiquarian, Bingham. He says, "In the persecution under Diocletian and his associates, though a strict inquiry was made after the books of Scripture, and other things belonging to the church, which were delivered up by the *Traditores*, to be burnt, yet we never read of any *Ritual* book of divine service delivered up among them ;

which is an argument that their forms of worship and administration of the sacrament, were not then generally committed to writing.”*

The incorporation of some of the notions of the eastern philosophy with the doctrine of Christ, originated a pernicious heresy concerning the person of Christ. The author of this heresy was Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria. He denied that Jesus Christ, in his divine nature, was equal with the Father; but he taught that he was the first and noblest of those beings whom God the Father had created out of nothing. The Arian doctrine spread considerably: it is believed to have been embraced by Constantine, and by several of the emperors, though it was condemned by several councils. Theodosius laboriously endeavoured to suppress it; but it still gained admirers in several nations, and occasioned great persecution and much bloodshed among Christians, under those emperors who became its patrons. Dr. Haweis says, “For nearly forty years, Arianism was the prevalent religion, especially in the East; and, except Athanasius, and a very few resolute witnesses for the truth, whom no menaces could terrify, or death induce to temporize, all the bishops of any name in the Christian world, at Rome, Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria, subscribed the Arian creed; submitted to the emperors; and kept their bishoprics. What the body of the people must be under such teachers, it is not difficult to suppose.”†

There were several bodies of seceders in this century, of whom we know but little, and that little derived from their enemies. Among these were the Meletians, so called from Meletius, an Egyptian bishop, and a noble confessor for Christ; Eustathians, from Eustathius, the catholic bishop of Antioch, whom the Arians had deposed; Donatists, from Donatus, bishop of Casæ. This last party originated in the irregular election of Cecilianus, bishop of Carthage, to whose ordination the Numidian bishops were not called: and they, with Donatus at their head, refused to own him. Cecilianus, however, possessed the greatest influence, and the Numidian bishops, to the

* Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book XIII. Chap. v. Sect. 3.

† *Impartial History of the Church*, Vol. I. p. 321.

number of seventy, were consequently expelled from their churches, and driven into exile, A. D. 316.

Where, in this century, religion prospered in its greatest purity, it may be difficult to ascertain. Probably vital godliness flourished most in those places far removed from the temptations inseparable from opulent cities, but of which we have little or no information. Dr. Haweis observes, “The Novatians still maintained their ground, and every testimony is borne to their remarkable purity of doctrine and piety of conduct, their zealous sufferings for the truth, and cordial affection to the good men of the suffering church who differed from them: but they were ‘schismatics.’ Among the purer party, I reckon the Novatian bishops, and probably many also of the Meletians, Eustathians, and Luciferians. Nor should I despair among the Donatists, that men of like manners might be found, with whatever abuse they have been loaded. Far removed from the great sources of corruption, riches, power, and connexion with the great philosophic world, they gave themselves to the word of God and to prayer; their work was their wages, and their people their joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were content to worship God the Son, as the excellent before them had done, as the true God; and to acknowledge a triune Jehovah without attempting to comprehend the mode of his existence; satisfied with the heartfelt knowledge and experience of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. Though probably not altogether free from a tincture of the prevailing superstitions, attention to the revealed word preserved them in the exercise of faith which worketh by love, and still ready to die for their Lord, if duty called.”*

* Impartial History, Vol. I. p. 299, 322, 344.

CHAPTER III.

CENTURY IV—(Continued.)

Revival of religion in Africa—Eminent ministers—Hilary—Athanasius—Basil—Ephraim—Gregory—Ambrose—Eusebius—Penance of the emperor Theodosius—Nicene council—Murder of eighty orthodox bishops by the Arians.

AMONG the numerous churches in the northern provinces of Africa there appears to have been an extensive revival of religion, at the latter end of the fourth century. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, and some of his colleagues, were the means of this happiness; and they seem to have understood and to have exemplified the gospel, far better than any of their contemporaries.

Besides Augustine, who is to be considered as belonging to the fifth century, there were several of eminent name and usefulness; but of those recorded by historians, or known by their writings, the most worthy to be remembered for their holiness of life, and evangelical labours, appear to have been Hilary, bishop of Poictiers; Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria; Basil, bishop of Cesarea; Ephraim, deacon of Edessa; Gregory Nazianzen, bishop of Constantinople; Ambrose, bishop of Milan; and Eusebius Pamphilus, bishop of Cesarea.

St. Hilary was descended from a noble family of Poictiers in France, and liberally educated. He became deeply convinced of the folly of the principles in which he had been instructed, and of their insufficiency to lead the immortal mind to substantial happiness. He contemplated the works of God, and sought to know their glorious Author. From the books of the Old Testament he attained to the knowledge of the true God, and afterwards possessing the New Testament, he found the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. He avowed his conversion to Christianity, and made such advances in Christian knowledge, as to be chosen bishop in his native city, twelve years before his death, which happened A. D. 367. He was active and laborious in his ministerial office, and a zealous champion for the orthodox faith against the Arians.

St. Athanasius was a native of Alexandria, and trained up

by his pious parents in the knowledge of Christian doctrine. At an early age his talents and character recommended him to Alexander, the patriarch and bishop of his native city, and he became his secretary. He accompanied that prelate to the council at Nice, A. D. 325, where, in support of the orthodox faith, he disputed against Arius. Two years after, he succeeded Alexander in the patriarchate, and spent the remaining forty-six years of his life in an almost incessant conflict with the Arians. During this time many emperors succeeded each other, several of whom were patrons of Arianism. Thus supported, the Arians cast the vilest calumnies upon Athanasius, and formed against him the most wicked conspiracies, through which he was several times banished; but the purity of his character being manifested, he was recalled. He died A. D. 373, leaving behind him a reputation eminent for piety, integrity, and virtue. The general course of his life evinces the excellency of his doctrine; and, by many, he is supposed to have been raised up for the special purpose of vindicating the proper divinity of Jesus Christ. His representation of the doctrine of the Trinity is worthy of the pen of Athanasius: he says, "The Father cannot be the Son, nor the Son the Father, and the Holy Ghost is never called by the name of the Son, but is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. The holy Trinity is but one Divine nature, and one God, with which nothing created can be joined. This is sufficient for the faithful; human knowledge goes no farther; the cherubims veil the rest with their wings."

St. Basil was one of the most learned and eloquent doctors of the church in the fourth century, on which account he was surnamed "the Great." His father was a man of piety; and, like Timothy, he was blessed with a pious mother, Emmelia, and grandmother, Maerina, who directed his education. To complete his education, he travelled to Constantinople and Athens, to gain all that could be learned from the greatest teachers of philosophy. For the peace and satisfaction of his mind, he was drawn to consecrate his powers to the doctrine of Christ, by which he was enabled to resist all the tempting offers made to him by the apostate emperor Julian. He devoted himself to the monastic life; but he frequently itine-

rated, as a Home Missionary, among the country people, diffusing the knowledge of the gospel. From these labours he was called to the bishopric of Cesarea, in which he was unusually diligent, reforming abuses, and seeking the welfare of the people. After various labours, and repeated vexations from the malicious Arians, he peacefully committed his weary spirit into the hands of his blessed Lord and Redeemer, A. D. 379. He was severely lamented by pious men in all the surrounding provinces.

Ephraim was a native of Nisibis in Syria, and educated with diligent care by his pious parents. He was of a retiring disposition, and it was with difficulty he could be prevailed upon to accept the office of deacon. It is said, that he feigned madness to avoid being chosen bishop. Perceiving how greatly the people were inclined to singing, he composed numerous religious hymns for their daily use, to those tunes which were familiar to them. His other writings were so considerable, and so greatly esteemed, that he was called "the Doctor and Prophet of the Syrians." He was highly esteemed by those prelates who were eminent for piety, and he died sincerely lamented, A. D. 379.

St. Gregory Nazianzen was so called from Nazianzum, a city in which his father was bishop. He received a learned education, and in his acquirements he surpassed most of his contemporaries. Going to Athens to finish his studies, he was overtaken by a storm, which was instrumental in leading him to think more seriously on the realities of the gospel, as a provision of sovereign mercy, for the salvation of sinners. He embraced the doctrines of Christ. He was ordained to the ministry by his father, whom he assisted in his pastoral labours. On his father's decease he went to Constantinople, of which he was chosen bishop, on account of his fame for piety and eloquence. He was by no means qualified to enter into the politics and intrigues of a court; and therefore, at the end of three years, he resigned his office, and spent the remainder of his life in retirement. He died A. D. 389.

St. Ambrose was the son of a Roman nobleman, who was a prefect or lord lieutenant in France, and his education was suitable to his rank in society. His father dying, the family

removed to Rome, where his pious sister, Marcellina, instructed him in the principles of religion. Ambrose being brought up to the law, followed his profession, and pleaded with remarkable success. His talents recommended him as a fit person for the government of a province, of which Milan was the capital. Five years he filled the station with remarkable prudence and justice, when Auxentius, the Arian bishop of Milan, died. The orthodox and Arian parties were exceedingly irritated against each other, and, in support of their opposite interests, they proceeded to acts of violence, so that Ambrose was compelled to interfere at the election, to preserve the peace of the city. While admonishing the contending parties to observe the rules of Christian peace and decorum, a child cried out, "Ambrose is bishop!" and the assembly, from this circumstance, was led to give a unanimous suffrage in his favour. Ambrose was astonished, and remonstrated; but in vain. After much deliberation, he accepted the office, and became one of the most pious, humble, zealous, and laborious ministers of the fourth century. He experienced much opposition from the Arians throughout his ministry, especially from the empress mother Justina. The hymn called "Te Deum," one of the finest pieces of uninspired writing, is attributed to the pen of Ambrose. Ambrose died A. D. 397.

Eusebius Pamphilus, bishop of Cesarea, in Palestine, must not be omitted, though some have considered him an Arian, on account of his having entertained Arius, when expelled from Alexandria. Under the Diocletian persecution, he succoured the martyrs, and encouraged the faithful to hold fast their profession in Christ Jesus. Himself suffered imprisonment, but escaped the death. His surname he took from his friend Pamphilus. He was in great favour with the emperor Constantine, whom he furnished with copies of the Scriptures, for the supply of his newly built churches at Constantinople. Mosheim calls him, "a man of immense reading, justly famous for his profound knowledge of ecclesiastical history, and singularly versed in other branches of literature, more especially in all the parts of sacred erudition." His literary labours in exposition or defence of Christianity were greater than any of the ancients, except Origen: but many of his writings are lost.

His “Evangelical Preparation,” and “Evangelical Demonstration,” are greatly esteemed: but especially his “Ecclesiastical History,” from the birth of Christ to A. D. 324, which is the most valuable monument of the primitive church extant. He died A. D. 340. Some writers confound Pamphilus with Eusebius of Nicomedia, who was an Arian.

With all the excellencies of these great men, truth requires that it be stated, that they were distinguished by the clerical vices of that age. They were the promoters of the increasing superstitions, giving an excess of homage to the dead, whom they supposed were intercessors with God, magnifying the virtues of reliques, and the merits of virginity and the monastic life. The episcopal haughtiness, even of the best of the prelates, may be learned from the extraordinary procedure of Ambrose towards the emperor Theodosius. That prince had signed an order, that the inhabitants of Thessalonica should be put to the sword, for the murder of one of his officers: the order was partly executed, and seven thousand were massacred. Ambrose, justly grieved, required of him a public penance: that he should put off his imperial robes, and pray for pardon prostrate upon the floor of the temple. The superstitious emperor complied, and was thus restored to the communion of the church.

The council of Nice must be here mentioned, as it is called the first general council, and is reckoned one of the most memorable events that are recorded in ecclesiastical history. The emperor Constantine called this assembly at Nice, in Bithynia, as is supposed A. D. 325, for the purpose of terminating the Arian controversy, and the disputes respecting the time of celebrating Easter. It is not known how many prelates assembled: but, after much discussion, the doctrine of Arius was condemned, and the superior nature of Christ declared to be consubstantial, or of the same essence with God the Father. The composition called the Nicene Creed, was the fruit of this celebrated council.

There is another event which occurred in this century, deserving special mention: it is the murder of eighty orthodox bishops by order of the Arian emperor Valens. They went to his palace at Nicomedia, to complain of his appointing an

Arian bishop of Constantinople. Enraged at their interference, he sentenced them to be banished; but gave secret orders for their destruction. The officer, therefore, to whom the emperor committed this horrible affair, put them on board a vessel, on pretence of conveying them to a distant port: but when clear of the coast, he set the ship on fire, leaving them to perish in the flames!

CHAPTER IV.

CENTURY V.

The Roman empire divided and subverted—Christianity extended—Northern nations—Scotland—Ireland—Persecutions—Images in the churches—Vices of the clergy—Monachism—Spurious writings—Arianism—Donatists—Eminent ministers—Chrysostom—Jerom—Augustine—Patrick—Germanus—Vigilantius—Paulinus—Theodosius II.—His sister Pulcheria.

AT the opening of the fifth century, the Roman empire was divided into two parts; Constantinople was the eastern capital, in which Arcadius presided as emperor; and Rome was the western metropolis, though Honorius kept his court at Ravenna. From this period, the power of the empire rapidly declined, and its glory departed, under a succession of feeble and luxurious princes. Out of the ruins of the western empire arose the ten kingdoms, as predicted by the apostle John, Revelation xvii. 12.

Swarms of savage hordes, from the north of Europe, under the names of Goths, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, &c., overran the richest provinces, sacking the cities, and committing every species of cruelty upon the people. Some of these barbarians had embraced the name of Christ, from Arian teachers, and their unsubdued passions were unloosed with fury upon those of the orthodox faith. Those bishops who confessed the true divinity of Christ were tortured, banished, or massacred with their people, and their beautiful temples levelled with the ground.

In this century, the boundaries of the church were, nevertheless, extended, especially among the northern nations of Europe, and the populous tribes of Africa.

The Burgundians, a savage people beyond the Rhine, received at least the name of Christianity. Great numbers of them applied to a bishop of France, by whom they were directed to wait seven days, to receive instruction, with fasting and prayer; after which he baptized and dismissed them.

Scotland was visited by Palladius, a missionary from Rome, to suppress the Pelagian heresy, and to carry on the work of evangelization, which, it is supposed, was commenced there before the close of the second century. Palladius is believed to have extended his labours among the Irish.

Ireland was favoured with the ministry of St. Patrick, on the decease of Palladius, and his labours and successes were equally surprising, if we may credit the common traditions.

Clovis, king of the French, was converted to Christianity in a remarkable manner. He had been a pagan idolater, while his wife Clotildis was a pious Christian. She laboured to bring her husband to believe on her Saviour, but in vain, till his army was defeated in a battle with the Germans. In his distress, it is said, he prayed, "O Lord Jesus, whom my wife Clotildis adores, I most earnestly implore thy help; and if thou shalt make me conquer in this battle, thou shalt be my God: I will believe in thy name; I will worship and serve thee; I will attend thy ordinances, and be baptized in thy name." He was successful; and, with his sister, and three thousand of his soldiers, was baptized. Clovis being the only prince of his time, professing the orthodox faith, he was called "The Eldest Son of the Church," and received the title of "The Most Christian King;" a title which the kings of France still assume.

The Iberians, a people on the Black Sea, became awakened to the value of the gospel by means of a pious woman, whom they had taken prisoner, she having recovered the child of their king from a dangerous illness.

Abyssinia is said to have been blessed with the ministry of Frumentius, whom Athanasius ordained as a missionary to that country.

The Indians on the Malabar coast enjoyed the Christian labours of Mar Thomas, a Nestorian missionary from Syria:

but some suppose that the country had been partially evangelized by Thomas, the apostle.

In Africa, Christianity must have spread prodigiously, as two hundred and eighty-six catholic bishops, and two hundred and seventy-nine bishops of the Donatists, were present at a conference held at Carthage, A. D. 411.

The calamities of the Christians in this century were exceedingly great; they being the principal sufferers in the revolutions produced by the northern barbarians.

In Britain the state of the churches was most afflicting; for the king Vortigern finding himself unable to withstand his pagan adversaries, the Scots and Piets, invited the warlike Anglo-Saxons to render him assistance. Perceiving the fertility of the island, these auxiliaries determined on reducing it to their own authority, and a bloody war ensued, which continued through the century. The Saxons being pagan idolaters, immense numbers of Christians fell victims to their ferocious bigotry, from which many fled into Wales, and into Brittany in France, where they might enjoy the privileges of their religion.

In Persia the Christians were numerous, and their sufferings had been many, from the enmity of the Magian priesthood, the worshippers of fire. At one time Maruthas, bishop of Mesopotamia, acquired the favour of the Persian monarch, and hopes were entertained of his embracing Christianity; but about A. D. 414, Abdas, the Christian bishop in Saza, rashly demolished the Pyræum, a temple dedicated to fire. The king Isdegerdes complained to him of the injury, and ordered him to rebuild the edifice; which he refusing, the bishop was put to death, the Christian temples were levelled with the ground, and a violent persecution followed. Vararanes, his son and successor on the throne, oppressed the Christians with still greater inhumanity, partly through the instigation of the Magian priests, and partly out of enmity to the Romans, with whom he was at war. The number of Christians who perished in exquisite tortures was prodigious.

Still greater were the cruelties endured by the Christians, from the ferocious Vandal chiefs, Genseric, and his son Hunneric. Genseric was sovereign in Spain, but he carried his power into Africa, and surprised Carthage in a time of peace.

This tyrant was an Arian, by his profession, and his enmity against the orthodox was manifested by every species of barbarity. The bishops he expelled from their churches, and martyred many. Hunneric banished four thousand nine hundred and twenty-six into the desert, after the most shocking usage in prisons and on the roads. Felix, the aged bishop of Abbirita, was tied across a mule, like a piece of timber. Of four hundred and forty-six bishops who were summoned to a conference, forty-eight died through ill usage, forty-six were banished into Corsica, three hundred and two into other places, and the rest made their escape. He sent executioners among the laity, by whom the faithful were whipped, hanged, and burned alive. At Tambaia, two brothers suspended with stones hung at their feet, one of them desired to be taken down that he might recant. "No, no," said the other; "this, brother, is not what we swore to Jesus Christ: I will testify against you, when we come before his awful throne, that we swore by his body and blood, that we would suffer for his sake." Inspired with new courage, he cried out, "Torment as you please, I will follow my brother's example."

Victorian, governor of Carthage, being known to be orthodox, attempts were made to gain him to the Arian creed. "Tell the king," said he, "if there were no other life after this, I would not for a little temporal honour be ungrateful to my God, who hath granted me grace to believe in him." The king, incensed at his Christian answer, ordered him to be tormented, by which he slept in Jesus, his Saviour.

Carthage, and the other African cities, it was said, needed some fiery visitation to purify the churches, and stop the progress of corruption; for they were sunk in depravity, and the most crying wickedness. Christianity had generally declined in this century. The declension may be attributed to various causes; but it is principally charged upon the clergy, whose vices were notorious; and to the ignorant and wicked neglect of the word and Spirit of God, through their example.

The increased wealth and extensive authority of the ecclesiastics, powerfully excited avaricious and ambitious men to seek clerical promotion. Such ministers of religion, for the most part lamentably deficient in learning and other requisite

talents, still further converted the exercises of public worship into the mere performance of fascinating ceremonies. To engage the admiration of an ignorant populace, pictures, and statues of Jesus Christ, of the Virgin Mary, with the infant in her arms, and of numerous saints, were set up in the churches, to be admired and worshipped. An invincible efficacy, in expelling evil spirits, and healing diseases, was attributed to the figure of the cross, and to the presence of the bones of the martyrs. The riches and magnificence of the churches exceeded all bounds; and the altars, and the chests in which the relics of the saints were preserved, were made of the richest materials; in many places they were formed of solid silver!

The people, having generally been deprived of their just right to choose their own pastors, multitudes were introduced into the body of the clergy, by the interest of the nobles, having no other view than the enjoyment of pre-eminence and worldly honour. The office of presbyter was looked upon of such an eminent nature, that Martin, bishop of Tours, had the audacity to maintain, at a public entertainment, that the emperor was inferior in dignity to one of that order! These lofty assumptions produced their correspondent fruits; and the most respectable writers of this century are unanimous in declaring, that the vices of the clergy were now carried to the most enormous lengths. Such a state of things could never have been endured, had not the people, almost universally, been sunk in superstition through their ignorance of the Holy Scriptures.

In this state of gloomy darkness, the clergy were looked upon as an order of persons peculiarly sacred by virtue of their office: and those who distinguished themselves by their eloquence or their writings were regarded with a superstitious veneration, as men full of the Deity, and were, in great numbers, canonized as saints when dead. Even at the close of the preceding century, such was the reverence paid to the clergy, that Martin of Tours was waited upon at a supper by the wife of the emperor Maximus, in the quality of a servant; the emperor consenting to her request that she might enjoy that supposed honour, in serving the haughty prelate!

Undoubtedly there were happy exceptions to the deplorable state of things before described : but ecclesiastical historians have been unable to make a distinct record of their extensive prosperity and evangelical purity. It is, however, probable that in many places, remote from the example of city dignitaries, there were churches of truly spiritual believers, flourishing in the beauties of gospel holiness, in the observance of Christian ordinances. The north of Africa, at the time of Augustine, and in his vicinity, appears to have been singularly distinguished in this respect. In the declension after his decease, the grievous sufferings of many, through the incursions of the barbarians, or the savage bigotry of the Arians, must have been the means of awakening the minds of many to a deeper sense of eternal things, and to draw them to seek their rest in the great Shepherd of Israel, waiting for his salvation. And those who sacrificed their liberties and lives, to preserve a good conscience, gave good evidence that they knew whom they had believed. Dr. Haweis says, “The Novatians were still a body, subsisting under holy bishops. Nor can I doubt that the Nestorians, at least many of them, were partakers of the grace of God in truth, as their fervent zeal to spread the gospel of Christ strongly demonstrated.”*

The shocking profligacy which prevailed contributed to the amazing increase of monachism in this century ; as sincerely pious men were glad to retire to any seclusion from the common scenes of depravity and corruption. These monastic institutions, of the orders of Anthony, Basil, Athanasius, and Augustine, were at first famed for their piety ; but growing rich through the superstitious retirement of wealthy men, who surrendered their property to the brotherhood, their licentiousness at the close of this century became proverbial. To stem the torrent of wickedness several reformers arose in this century ; but they were opposed and silenced by the courtly or superstitious clergy. Among these eminent men were Chrysostom and Vigilantius.

Instead of referring to the Holy Scriptures for the authoritative decisions of disputes, it was common to appeal to the

* Impartial History of the Church, Vol. II., p. 26.

writings of the early Fathers in the church. Hence, as Dr. Mosheim observes, “many audacious impostors were encouraged to publish their own writings under the name of ancient Christian worthies ; nay, under the sacred name of even Christ himself and his holy apostles ; that thus in the deliberations of councils, and the course of controversy, they might have authorities to oppose to authorities, in defence of their opinions. The whole Christian church was, in this century, overwhelmed with these infamous cheats, these spurious productions.”* Hence also the interpolations and corruptions in the writings of the early Fathers.

The Arian heresy continued and prevailed in this century, as we have seen. The churches in the East were principally Arian ; and such generally were the newly converted nations in the north of Europe : the habits and manners of those who received that doctrine appear to have been characterized by a licentiousness and bigotry far greater than of those who retained the Nicene creed.

The Nestorians were a considerable body in this century : they were so called from Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople. He resolutely opposed the custom which had become common, of calling the Virgin Mary “the Mother of God.” For this he was anathematized, and a controversy was raised of a bitter and perplexing character, though he held, as well as his opponents, the proper divinity, and humanity, and atonement, of Jesus Christ.

New heresies were constantly arising ; but the most noted was the Pelagian, so called from Pelagius, a Welsh monk. This teacher denied the original corruption of human nature, through the fall of our first parents ; and with that denial he disallowed the necessity of divine grace to enlighten the understanding, and to purify the heart. These doctrines he opposed, as being prejudicial to the interests of virtue. He maintained that the sins of our first parents were imputed to themselves alone, and not to their posterity ; that we derive no corruption from their fall, but that we are born as pure and unspotted as Adam was, when he came out of the forming hand of his Creator ; that mankind, therefore, are capable of a repentance

* History of the Church, Vol. II.

and amendment, and of arriving at the highest degrees of piety and virtue, by the unassisted use of our natural faculties; that external grace is indeed necessary to excite their endeavours, but that they have no need of the internal succours of the Holy Spirit.

The Novatians continued a considerable body; but they were regarded by the haughty dignitaries with jealousy, and persecuted, although, as Dr. Haweis observes, their pastors were *holy bishops*.

The Donatists were numerous in Africa, nearly or quite equal to those called Catholic. To ascertain their peculiar doctrines is impossible, though it is thought by some that they were inclined to Arianism. They refused submission to the decisions of the councils: they pleaded for the independency of their churches, and sought protection from the emperor. They were, therefore, considered as schismatics, and provoked even to madness and despair. The Circumcelliones were confounded with them, and these had recourse to arms for their defence. At one time, it is said, that "three hundred of their bishops, with many thousands of the inferior clergy, were torn from their churches, stripped of their ecclesiastical possessions, banished to the islands, and proscribed by the laws if they presumed to conceal themselves in the provinces of Africa. A regular fine, from ten to two hundred pounds of silver, was curiously ascertained, according to the distinctions of rank and fortune, to punish the crime of assisting at a schismatic conventicle."*

There were several ministers in the church, during the fifth century, of considerable eminence. Among these the most famous were, 1. John Chrysostom. He was born of a noble family at Antioch. After receiving a learned education, he spent some time in a retired situation, and then returned to his native city, where he was ordained to the Christian ministry. In his public exercises he was so distinguished by his eloquence, that he was surnamed Chrysostom, or "Golden-mouth." Nectarius, patriarch of Constantinople, dying, Chrysostom, whose fame was spread throughout the empire, was appointed to succeed him, through the influence of Eutropius, the chief

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. II.

chamberlain of the palace. Having entered upon his office, he reformed many of the abuses which subsisted among the clergy, retrenched a great part of the expenses in which his predecessors had lived, and applied the surplus to the relief of the poor, and the building and support of a hospital. He suspended and procured the deposition of thirteen Asiatic bishops, of scandalous lives, and placed pious men in their room. He preached with the utmost zeal against the pride, luxury, and avarice of the great; and the licentious clergy hating his severe morality, conspired against him; and as he opposed the worship of images, the empress Eudoxia, whose statue of silver was set up in the church, united with his enemies in procuring his condemnation and banishment, six years after his elevation to that dignity. He still preached in his exile, the people flocking to hear him; on account of which he was harassed and removed from place to place. He died through the brutality of the soldiers who were ordered to convey him into Africa, A.D. 407. A learned ecclesiastical historian makes this reflection upon the case of Chrysostom: "Behold a bishop of the first see, learned, eloquent beyond measure, of talents the most popular, of a genius the most exuberant, and of a solid understanding by nature; magnanimous and generous, liberal, I had almost said to excess, sympathizing with distress of every kind, and severe only to himself; a determined enemy of vice, and of acknowledged piety in all his intentions. Yet we have seen him exposed to the keenest shafts of calumny, expelled with unrelenting rage by the united efforts of the court, the nobility, the clergy of his own diocese, and the bishops of other diocesses."* It was said of Chrysostom, that he so highly esteemed the Epistle to the Romans, that he had it read over to him twice every week. From this fact, we need not wonder at his piety, orthodoxy, or zeal.

2. Jerome was a pious but superstitious monk, the most learned of the Fathers who wrote in Latin. He devoted the greater part of his life to the study and publication of the Holy Scriptures. For this purpose, he laboured to master the Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac languages. Disgusted at Rome,

* Milner's Church History, Vol. II.

he retired to Bethlehem, where Paulina, one of his proselytes, a pious Roman lady, erected a monastery for him, and a nunnery over which she herself presided for twenty years. Jerome added a hospital to his residence, in which persecuted Christians found an asylum. In this retreat, he rendered essential service to the cause of Christ, if not by his other writings, yet by his Latin version of the whole Old Testament, accompanied by a corrected edition of the ancient version of the New Testament. This translation is called the Vulgate, and it has been adopted as the standard Bible of the Roman Catholic church. The Latin version of the Bible by Jerome was of incalculable benefit to the church of God at the time of the Reformation. The writings of Jerome make us acquainted with the virtues of several pious ladies, especially Paulina and her daughters Eustochium and Paulina. Jerome died A. D. 420, aged ninety years.

3. Augustine was a Numidian by birth, and became bishop of Hippo in Africa. His father Patricius, and his mother Monica, educated him with care in Christian principles. Monica especially was a person of singular piety; the precepts and example of whom Augustine disregarded for a period of thirty years, abandoning himself to a very licentious course of living. His repentance, however, in the prime of his days, was equally remarkable. He learned by heartfelt and happy experience the powerful efficacy of sanctifying grace; and being thus brought to rejoice in the salvation of Christ, he became, if not the most eminent, one of the most holy and useful ministers of the gospel since the days of the apostles. He laboured much and successfully, both by his preaching and writings, to destroy the Pelagian heresy, which had been introduced into Africa by its own author. The writings of Augustine were many, and highly esteemed by devout men in succeeding ages, and by our Reformers. The influence of Augustine was remarkably great among the churches in Africa, which must have been exceedingly numerous, as nearly three hundred bishops assembled with him in conference at one time. Augustine was not free from the prevailing superstitions, nor from a persecuting spirit, which the Donatists bitterly experienced: but when we reflect upon the age in

which he lived, his pious confession of his faults before God, the purity of his life from his conversion to his death, his indefatigable endeavours to spread the gospel so far as he understood it, his supreme love to the Saviour, and the rich fruit of his labours, we must acknowledge him to have been a truly pious and singularly eminent minister of Christ. He died A. D. 430, aged seventy-six years.

4. St. Patrick was a native of Scotland, and of a noble family. By banditti he was carried prisoner to Ireland, where he continued six years, and learned the barbarous language of the people. He made his escape, and formed the benevolent purpose of converting those uncivilized islanders. To qualify himself for the mission, he travelled some years upon the Continent, and pursued his studies under his mother's uncle Martin, bishop of Tours, and Germanus, bishop of Auxerre. Pope Celestine consecrated him bishop of Ireland, and changed his name from Succathus to Patrick, to indicate his patrician descent, and to give weight to his commission. With twenty assistant ministers, he proceeded on his mission, and itinerated through the whole country. He founded several schools, he taught the Irish the use of letters, built many places of worship, and gathered, it is said, three hundred and sixty-five churches, over whom he ordained as many bishops. Armagh and Dublin are said to have been constituted archbishoprics by him. In about sixty years, the whole population was converted at least to nominal Christianity. Extravagant and incredible are the stories which are reported of the labours and miracles of St. Patrick: but whatever allowances we may make for the superstitions of the times, it seems evident that Patrick was a great and a good man. He lived to the age of a hundred and twenty years, and died about A. D. 460.

5. Germanus, bishop of Auxerre in France, was a minister of remarkable zeal. At the recommendation of a council of bishops, A. D. 430, he visited the Britons, for the purpose of destroying the Pelagian heresy. Luper, bishop of Troyes, accompanied him. They preached in the highways, and in the open country, to vast crowds of people. The Pelagians were induced to come to a conference, and were confuted and

silenced by the passages of Scripture which these advocates produced in support of the doctrines of grace. These two bishops, having succeeded in their mission, returned to their flocks : but in 446 Germanus visited Britain again for the same purpose, and with good success. He died A. D. 448.

6. Vigilantius was a Spanish presbyter, a native of Gaul, a man of eminent learning and remarkable eloquence. Perceiving the folly of doing homage to the relics and images of the saints, he preached zealously against them, and the other numerous superstitious customs, which superstition and falsehood had introduced, as irrational and unscriptural : but Jerome patronized such usages ; and, provoked at his interference, became his opponent. This reformer, therefore, was obliged to purchase peace by observing silence.

7. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, was a native of Bourdeaux ; he married Theresia, a rich and pious lady, and retired to Barcelona in Spain, where the people so esteemed his devotion and talents as to insist upon his ordination to the ministry. He was bishop of Nola for the last twenty-two years of his life, and died A. D. 431. Writing of his ordination he says, “ The people obliged me to receive the order of the priesthood against my will. I tremble when I consider its importance, conscious as I am of my own weakness : but He that giveth wisdom to the simple, and out of the mouths of babes and sucklings perfects praise, is able to accomplish his work in me, to give me his grace, and to make me worthy whom he called when unworthy.” A man of such principles, chosen by the people to be their minister, must, we may be assured, be the instrument of great good.

The emperor Theodosius II. is deserving of mention in this place. He was a feeble prince ; but his sister Pulcheria, who possessed a masculine mind, sanctified by divine grace, had the chief direction of the government in her brother’s name. She was his counsellor in religion. Early in the morning, the young emperor rose to unite with his two sisters in their devotions. He had many parts of the Word of God by heart ; and, it is said, he could discourse of them with the bishops like an aged divine. He took much pains to collect the books of Scripture, with their principal commentators ; and his temper,

though not free from the influence of superstition, indicated the genuine sincerity of his profession. Sometimes he was induced to attend the circus, where, on one occasion, there was a dreadful tempest; on which the emperor suggested the propriety of betaking themselves to prayer: the motion was accepted, the emperor set an example of singing hymns, and the whole assembly gave themselves to devotion. This sovereign made a law to prevent the Lord's day being profaned by the Jews and pagans attending the theatre. He laboured in various ways to extend the knowledge of the Christian faith, and died A. D. 450. Pulcheria gave herself in marriage to Marcian; both of whom, it is said, were as eminent for morals and piety as the superstitions of the age permitted them; and Marcian thus became emperor of Constantinople.

CHAPTER V.

CENTURY VI.

Deplorable state of religion—Disorders increased by the northern nations—Monks—Fulgentius—Cæsarius—Gregory the Great—Extension of Christianity—Arrival of Austin in England with forty monks—Murder of the monks of Bangor.

WRETCHEDLY deplorable was the state of the church during the sixth century. Abuses were daily multiplied, and superstition drew from its baleful fecundity an incredible number of absurdities, which were employed to amuse the people, instead of their being instructed from the Scriptures in the doctrines of Christ. The public ministers of religion continued to degenerate still farther from the apostolic character. They seemed to aim at nothing so much as sinking the multitude into the most opprobrious ignorance and superstition, to efface from their minds all sense of the excellency and beauty of genuine piety, and to substitute, in the place of evangelical principles, a blind veneration for the clergy, and a stupid zeal for a senseless service of ridiculous rites and ceremonies. The teachers themselves were, for the most part, grossly ignorant;

almost as much so as the multitude whom they were appointed to instruct.

The disorders of the empire also seriously affected the state of the church. The swarms of barbarian soldiers, by whom the western empire was overturned, contributed to confirm the ignorance and superstition which had been promoted by the licentious tyranny of the clergy; and the small remains of piety and learning found a wretched asylum among the multiplied societies of the monks. The clergy highly commended the monastic life; and it had, therefore, an incredible number of patrons and followers. In this manner the credit and wealth of the several orders prodigiously increased in all parts of the Christian world. Some of their founders appear evidently to have been men of piety; but in proportion as these communities acquired their immense riches, from the devout liberality of the opulent, they sunk into luxury, intemperance, and sloth; and, in the end, abandoned themselves to all sorts of vices. From time to time reformers arose among them, some of whom appeared to be men of sincere piety, but at the same time lamentably ignorant of the Scriptures. These, in their uninstructed zeal, established new orders, and prescribed different rules of living still more severe and self-denying; but they also, in their turn, soon degenerated by the same means as the others had done.

In the societies of the monks were, indeed, the most learned men of those times; but the liberal arts and sciences received only such a degree of culture among them as just preserved them, in this dark age, from totally perishing. Many of the abbots, the heads of the monasteries, were chosen from among the nobility, as the office was both lucrative and honourable; and these often showed the bitterest aversion towards every kind of learning and erudition, and this sometimes under pretence of its being pernicious to the progress of piety. Some, indeed, possessed a literary taste; by whom the monks, incapable of other services, were employed to transcribe the learned productions of former ages. To them, therefore, we are indebted for the preservation and possession of most of the ancient writings, both sacred and profane, which escaped the

savage fury of Gothic ignorance, and which have been happily transmitted to our times.

In this gloomy age there appeared but few eminent ministers of the church, among whom may be mentioned, as most worthy, Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspina in Africa; Cæsarius, bishop of Arles in France; and Gregory, bishop of Rome.

Fulgentius was descended from a noble family at Carthage. He received a liberal education at Constantinople, and enjoyed a lucrative situation; but his religious convictions increasing, he relinquished his office, and became a monk in Africa, in the monastery built by Faustus, who had been driven from his bishopric by the persecuting Arians. Fulgentius was a great sufferer under Thrasamond, the Arian king of the Vandals; and after he was chosen bishop of Ruspina, he was banished to Sardinia with more than two hundred Trinitarian bishops. The Arian persecutor dying, and being succeeded by Hilderic, the bishops were recalled: after which Fulgentius lived six years, a zealous opposer of the Arian and Pelagian errors, and an eminent example of piety, humility, and charity. His writings display an excellent spirit and eminent soundness in the faith, and they were useful in a considerable degree to the numerous ministers in Africa. Fulgentius died A. D. 533.

Cæsarius was appointed bishop of Arles at the age of thirty, and he appears to have been an extensive blessing to France. He effected several important measures of reform. In public worship, he induced the congregation to join the clergy in the singing of psalms, and exhorted them to sing with their hearts as well as their voices. In a meeting of bishops, of whom Cæsarius was one, it was decreed that all country priests should receive young men into their houses, to be educated with a paternal regard, taught to learn the psalms, and to read the Scriptures, and thus to become acquainted with the Word of God, that the churches might be supplied with a succession of worthy ministers. In another council, in which Cæsarius presided, it was agreed upon among other things, "We are not able, by our own natural strength, to do or think any thing which may conduce to our salvation. We believe that Abel, Noah, Abraham, and the other Fathers, had not by nature that faith that St. Paul commendeth in them, but by grace. If any

man affirm that he can, by the vigour of nature, think any thing good which pertains to salvation as he ought, or choose or consent to the saving, that is, to evangelical preaching, without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all the sweet relish in consenting to and believing the truth, he is deceived by a heretical spirit."* Men of such principles must have been blessings to their churches. Cæsarius preached every Sunday, and on holidays; but if he was prevented, he caused the sermons of Augustine, or Ambrose, or his own, to be read for the edification of his people. He endured much persecution, and died generally lamented, A. D. 542.

Gregory was descended from a senatorial family, one of the most illustrious and wealthy in Rome. He was educated suitably to his rank, and he soon distinguished himself in the senate. He was raised by the emperor to be governor of Rome, at a time when it was surrounded by victorious enemies. In this high station, he gave universal satisfaction: but reflecting upon the vanity of worldly greatness, the emptiness of its sweetest pleasures, and the danger of their leading to the neglect and loss of the soul, on the death of his father he renounced the world, and with his immense wealth he built and endowed six monasteries, and devoted himself to the monastic life. The bishop of Rome, knowing his great talents, employed him on a difficult mission to the emperor at Constantinople. On his return he was chosen abbot, in which office he was excessively rigorous. He was elected bishop of Rome, and set himself vigorously to exterminate the reigning immorality of the clergy, imposing upon them various monkish rules of living. He exerted himself laboriously, both by preaching and writing, for the instruction of the people, especially in the observance of his newly invented ceremonies. His writings, especially his litanies and prayers, indicate serious piety; but it was greatly tarnished by the grossest prevailing superstitions of the age. Mr. Milner says, "The Church of England is indebted to Gregory for the Litany. Galasius, before him, had appointed public prayers, composed by himself

* Milner, Vol. II., p. 20, 21.

or others. These were all placed in the offices by Gregory. And by a comparison of our Book of Common Prayer with his Sacramentary, it is evident, that almost all the Collects for Sundays, and the principal festivals in the Church of England, were taken out of the latter.* Gregory invented a long train of senseless ceremonies, and largely distributed to the deluded multitude the ridiculous and falsely pretended wonder-working relics of departed saints and martyrs. Dr. Haweis observes, "The 'canon of the mass,' now produced by the great Gregory, with all its pomp and fooleries, became more universally celebrated. Images of saints, and relics, multiplied so immensely, that there were sometimes more bones of a saint than ever belonged to a human body. And, what is ridiculous enough, the Lupercalia, or feast of Pan, with all its impurities, received a new title, as the festival of the 'Virgin's purification,' with all the heathen rites continued."† Gregory zealously maintained all the extravagant pretensions of the former bishops of Rome; though, it is said, he never abused his own power. The greatest stain upon the character of Gregory is his vile flattery of the usurper Phocas, who had gained the imperial dignity by means of the most horrible murders. Gregory died A. D. 605, having been fifteen years bishop of Rome.

The boundaries of the church were somewhat extended in the sixth century. Columbas, an Irish monk, is said to have laboured with success in converting the Scots and Picts to the faith of Christ. Some of the Jews in Spain, several tribes of barbarians on the shores of the Euxine Sea, and some people of Germany under the names of Bohemians, Thuringians, and Boii, embraced Christianity; but their conversions were the reception of the name of Christ, and of superstitious rites, rather than the truths of the gospel, as contained in the Scriptures.

Two things further are particularly remarkable, as belonging to the sixth century. First, the fiery disputes between the bishops of Constantinople and of Rome, on account of the former assuming the title of "Universal Bishop." Secondly,

* Milner, Vol. II., p. 88.

* Impartial History, Vol. II., p. 40, 41.

the arrival in England of Austin with forty monks, sent by Gregory the Great, for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. Their king Ethelbert, whose queen Bertha he had recently married, was the daughter of Cherebert, king of France; and, being a Christian, she used her influence to advance the object of Austin's mission. It is impossible to derive correct information concerning the mission of Austin: but the most probable account is, that Bertha had endeavoured to convert her husband to the Christian faith; and in this good work, the ministers who followed her from France laboured successfully with her. Finding the harvest plenteous, while the labourers were few, she applied to the bishop of Rome for assistance; in compliance with which, he sent Austin and his companions.

The common account is, that Gregory, even while a monk, projected this mission, and offered himself to the Pope, to undertake it. The circumstance which led him to form such a purpose is said to have been as follows:—Walking one day in the market-place at Rome, he saw some beautiful youths offered for sale as slaves. On learning they were pagans, and that their countrymen were called *Angli*, the Latin term for the people Angles, he observed, their countenances were like angels; and expressed his lamentation that they were not fellow-heirs with angels. On being told they were natives of a province called Deira, “These people,” said he, “should be delivered *de Dei irā*,” that is, “from the wrath of God.” On being informed that their king was named Alle, said he, “Alleluiah to God should be sung in those regions.” When made bishop of Rome, he sent Austin and his companions, who were permitted to land, and to enter Canterbury, where the king resided; the whole company singing a litany, and carrying a picture of Christ and a silver cross in the procession. They were successful in their mission; for the king and some of his nobles being baptized, no less than ten thousand submitted to that rite on Christmas-day, A. D. 596; and the idol temples were converted into Christian churches, which were amply furnished with saintly relics and priestly robes, a large supply of which Austin had brought with him from Rome. Many of the pagan rites were retained by order of the Pope, who

allowed the people to “ kill and eat as great a number of oxen to the glory of God, as they had formerly done to the devil.”

This missionary then repaired to France for episcopal consecration, and was invested by Gregory with power over all the British and Saxon prelates, and was thus made the first archbishop of Canterbury.

Austin, and those in connexion with him, were not the only Christians in England. The ancient Britons, as we have seen, had received Christianity three or four hundred years before this time ; but they had been driven principally into Wales by the conquering pagan Saxons, by whom England was now divided into seven or eight kingdoms, of which Kent was the greatest. Augustine sought a union with those Christians in Wales, but he was unable to effect it, as he appeared to them full of imperious pride, and desirous rather to bring them under his prelatical dominion and that of Rome. He became their enemy, and threatened them ; and, as is believed, stirred up the civil powers against them : so that, some time after Austin’s decease, eleven hundred of the monks and Christians of Bangor were murdered by Ethelfrid, the Saxon king of Northumberland.

CHAPTER VI.

CENTURY VII.

The church still degenerates—Vices of the clergy—British, Irish, and Scots—English churches—Oswald, king of Northumberland—Missionaries—Columban—Gal—Kilian—Willebrod, &c.—Nestorians—Paulicians—Contests between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople—The bishop of Rome assumes the title of Universal Bishop—Mohammed—True church—Prophecy fulfilled.

THE church seemed still more to degenerate in the seventh century. “ In this barbarous age, religion lay expiring under a motley and enormous heap of superstitious inventions, and had neither the courage nor the force to raise her head, or to display her native charms to a darkened and deluded world. In the earlier periods of the church, the worship of Christians was confined to the one supreme God, and his Son Jesus Christ ; but the Christians of this century multiplied the

objects of their devotion, and paid homage to the remains of the true cross, to the images of saints, and to bones whose real owners were extremely dubious.”*

The lordly ambition of the Roman Pontiffs excited general abhorrence. “The progress of vice among the clergy was truly shocking: neither bishops, presbyters, deacons, nor even the cloistered monks, were exempt from the general contagion; as appears from the unanimous confession of all the writers of this century that are worthy of credit. In those very places which were consecrated to the advancement of piety, and the service of God, there was little else to be seen besides ghostly ambition, insatiable avarice, pious frauds, intolerable pride, and a superstitious contempt of the natural rights of the people, with many other evils still more enormous.”†

There were, however, some happy exceptions to this corrupt state of things. The ancient Britons, the Scots, and Irish, persisted long in the maintenance of their religious liberty; notwithstanding the efforts of Laurentius, the second archbishop of Canterbury, Mellitus, bishop of London, and Justus, bishop of Rochester; and neither promises nor threats of the legates of the Popes could engage them to submit to the decree and authority of the Roman prelates. Mr. Milner, therefore, calls them Schismatics! In their churches, religious liberty appears to have been attended with a considerable effusion of the Holy Spirit.

The English churches continued subject to the bishop of Rome, and efforts were made to extend Christianity by their ministers. Eadbald despised Christianity, the people relapsed into idolatry, and the bishops were about to abandon the country; on which Eadbald repented of his wickedness, submitted to baptism, and became a zealous supporter of the faith. He gave his sister Tate in marriage to Edwin, king of Northumberland, on condition of his receiving Christianity, to which he consented; and Paulinus was consecrated bishop of the north of England by Justus of Rochester. Edwin and all his nobles, with many of the people, and Coifi, the chief priest of

* Mosheim’s Ecclesiastical History, Vol. II., p. 176.

† Ibid., p. 171.

the idolaters, embraced the doctrine of Paulinus, and were baptized in a wooden building at York, A. D. 627. After six years Edwin was slain in battle, and his queen, with Paulinus, returned into Kent, leaving James, his deacon, to keep alive the Christian profession.

Oswald, his nephew, a pious prince from Ireland, at length succeeded Edwin. He laboured to evangelize his subjects, assisted by Aidan, an Irish missionary, to whom Oswald himself acted as an interpreter in his preaching.

The prejudices of the excellent Mr. Milner led him to denominate Aidan a schismatic: and yet he says, “The character of this missionary would have done honour to the purest times. Aidan himself was a shining example of godliness. He laboured to convert infidels, and to strengthen the faithful. He gave to the poor whatever presents he received from the great, and employed himself with his associates in the Scriptures continually. He redeemed captives with the money which he received from the rich; he instructed them afterwards, and fitted them for the ministry.”* The labours of such a man must have been inspired of God, and by his special grace made effectual to the salvation of many souls.

Columban, another Irish missionary, at the close of the last century, succeeded in extinguishing idolatry from a great part of France; and, after diffusing the gospel among the people, he proceeded to carry the lamp of sacred truth among the Boii, the Franks, and other German nations.

Gal, one of his companions, preached the gospel among the Swiss, and their neighbours. Kilian, from Scotland, laboured among the eastern Franks; from whom, great numbers are said to have embraced Christianity. Kilian and his companions, were murdered, in consequence of their declaring it unlawful for Gosbert to have his brother’s wife. Gosbert the duke promised to obey the truth; but Geilana, in his absence, was thus avenged on the preachers, who had pointed out her sin.

Willibrod, by birth an Anglo-Saxon, accompanied by eleven of his countrymen, at the close of this century, crossed the

* Milner’s Church History, Vol. III., p. 106, 107.

Channel, on a mission to the Netherlands. His success he reported to the Roman Pontiff, by whom he was ordained, A. D. 696, archbishop of Utrecht, where he died at an advanced age, while his associates carried the gospel into Westphalia, and the neighbouring countries. Rupert, bishop of Worms, was a successful missionary in Bavaria, assisted by twelve labourers. Emmerman, a Frenchman, laboured prosperously in the same field; but he was murdered by Lambert, son of the Duke Theodo.

It cannot be denied, that some of these missionaries were influenced chiefly by ambition, seeking worldly establishments; and Willibrod is considered as one of that class: but, without doubt, others were holy men of God, and the means of spreading the precious seed of evangelical truth, and of kindling a fire of divine love among guilty men, bringing them to realize the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.

There are some pleasing evidences of the Nestorians, who dwelt in Syria, Persia, and India, labouring to propagate Christianity among the barbarous nations of Asia; and the indefatigable assiduity of their ministry was crowned with remarkable success. By the labours of this people, the light of the gospel first penetrated into the empire of China; the eastern parts of which abounded with Christians, in the preceding century, under the inspection of the patriarch of Chaldea. About A. D. 637, a new mission was undertaken to that country, under the direction of Jesuibus; and monuments of their prosperity were found by the Jesuit missionaries in the seventeenth century.

The Paulicians arose about A. D. 660. The enemies of this sect give them the name of some unknown teacher: but their true founder appears to have been Constantine of Samosata. He had entertained a deacon, who had escaped from captivity among the Mohammedans; and in return for his hospitality he gave Constantine a copy of the New Testament. This gift he esteemed precious, as the clergy carefully concealed the Scriptures from the vulgar. Finding its instructions so contrary to the prevailing superstitions, he studied the sacred oracles, and formed for himself a system of theology from them; and as Paul appeared to be the most perfect

teacher of Christian doctrine, Constantine devoted himself to his writings with peculiar zeal, assuming the name of Sylvanus, one of Paul's companions. His disciples were called by the names of the apostle's colleagues, as Timothy, Titus, and Tychicus; and six of their churches also were distinguished by the names of those to whom Paul addressed his epistles. They rejected human tradition as authority in religion, the worship of the Virgin Mary, of images, and of the cross. They abolished the names of bishops and presbyters, and instituted a set of pastors, with perfect equality, and without pompous robes to distinguish them from the people. They were charged with holding the errors of the Manicheans and Gnostics, and with having rejected the Old Testament. But these appear to have been slanders, and themselves complain of being branded with odious names. In Asia Minor they increased greatly, and the Greek emperors raised a grievous persecution against them. An officer named Simeon was commissioned to proceed to Colonia, the place where Sylvanus resided; and he and a number of his followers were apprehended. They were required to stone their pastor, as the price of their forgiveness; but Justus only could be found sufficiently base to comply. He stoned his faithful teacher to death; and thus died the father of the Paulicians, after he had laboured twenty-seven years, diffusing the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Justus aggravated his dreadful guilt, by betraying his brethren; while Simeon, seeing the grace of God in the joyful sufferers, embraced the faith, forsook the world, preached the gospel, and died a martyr for Christ!

The exorbitant claims of the clergy were still defended; and with yet more inflamed zeal. The disputes about pre-eminence between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople were continued with the bitterest animosity. The title of "Universal Bishop," as an honorary appellation, had been enjoyed by the latter for nearly two hundred years: but Boniface of Rome procured the same title to be granted to him, from the odious usurper Phocas, A. D. 607; from which time, the Popes have pretended to be the supreme heads or absolute monarchs of the Christian church, the Vicars of Christ on earth.

Many of the ancient heresies still continued in existence;

and some of their leaders and patrons filled a great part of the East with carnage and assassinations; of which, indeed, the Catholics were scarcely less guilty; so that the vengeance of Christians was regarded by many in this age with the deepest horror. This shocking appearance of misnamed Christianity was observed with astonishment by Mohammed, an Arabian merchant, a man of most singular talents; and the fanatical impostor formed the determination to invent and propagate a new system of religion. Skilful in the knowledge of human nature, and assisted by a learned Jew, he adapted his doctrines to the corrupt passions of mankind, and to the manners of the eastern nations; tolerating the vices to which they were particularly addicted. His system embraced a great part of the facts of the patriarchal history, as contained in the Scriptures, mingled with Rabbinical and Arabian fables, which together he pretended to be the religion of the patriarchs and prophets restored. This artful contrivance, managed with consummate address, engaged numbers as his colleagues and disciples, and, by means of war, rapine, and slaughter, soon gave its founder the sovereignty of Arabia, with several adjoining provinces.

The learned Hugo Grotius describes the state of things at this period in a most striking manner: "Constantine and the following emperors," he says, "made the profession of the Christian religion not only safe, but honourable; and having, as it were, thrust the world into the church first, the Christian princes waged war without measure, even when they might have enjoyed peace. The bishops quarrelled with each other most bitterly, about the highest places; and religion began everywhere to be placed, not in purity of mind, but in rites, and in a violent adhering to the party they had chosen: the final event of which was, that there were everywhere a great many Christians in name, but very few in reality. God did not overlook these faults of his people; but, from the farthest corners of Scythia and Germany, poured vast armies, like a deluge, upon the Christian world: and when the great slaughter made by these did not suffice to reform those which remained, by the just permission of God, Mahomet planted in a religion directly opposite to the Christian."*

* Grotius's Truth of the Christian Religion, Book II., Sect. 1.

As to the true spiritual church of Christ in this dark age, Dr. Haweis remarks, “ Neither numbers, power, nor greatness, constitute the church. No man can belong to it, who is not joined to the Lord in one spirit; and however reduced the body may be to appearance, yet, like the seven thousand in Israel who would not bow to the image of Baal, Christ still had his remnant, according to the eternal counsel of his own will. The highly exemplary zeal of the Nestorians to spread the knowledge of Christ through the dark regions of the East, and the extent and success of their labours, suggest a strong evidence that the religion of the Son of God was cultivated in its power and divine influence among many of them. Nor shall I hastily believe all that their enemies charge on the Paulicians, when I see such favourable appearances of an attempt to oppose the reigning superstitions, and to reform the abuses in the church government. The churches of England and Scotland, according to the testimony of the venerable Bede, rejecting the imperious claims of Rome and her legates, maintained their independence, and seem not as yet destitute of that liberty known by all in whom the Spirit of the Lord is.

“At the close of this century, also we find, the first traces of a small but precious body, afterwards named Valdenses, which some suppose a branch of Paulicians. Retiring from the insolence and oppression of the Romish clergy, and disgusted with their vices, they sought a hiding-place in the secluded valleys of Pais de Vaud, enbosomed by the Alps, and removed from the observation of their persecutors, where they might enjoy purer worship and communion with God.”*

The most remarkable thing in the history of the church, during the seventh century, was the fulfilment of the Scripture prophecies. First, by the antichristian pretensions of the Roman bishop in the west, as *monarch* in the church, but in the Scripture language a *Beast*: and at the same time in the east, by the abominable corruptions of the impostor of Arabia, foretold as the *False Prophet*.†

* Impartial History, Vol. II., p. 78--80.

† 2 Thess. ii, 3--10; Rev. xvi, 13; xvii,

CHAPTER XII.

CENTURY VIII.

Progress of Mohammedism—Claims of the clergy—Their enormous riches—Papal excommunications—Controversy respecting image-worship—Charlemagne—Alcuin—Labours to advance religion and learning—Venerable Bede—Boniface missionary—Several missionaries—Kissing the Pope's foot.

THE darkness and corruption of the past age continued in the eighth century, with various additional evils. The Mohammedan imposture made astonishing progress, under the martial successors of its founder. The intestine wars, and successive revolutions, had prepared the eastern empire for becoming a prey to the ferocious Saracens, and the Turks of Tartary. They conquered great part of Spain, and several other provinces of Europe, and the northern parts of Africa; by which means the forms and even the names of Christianity were in many places almost totally extirpated.

The usurped dignities of the clergy were still maintained. The barbarous nations of the west, who had been proselyted from paganism, were kept in the grossest ignorance by the priests. They, therefore, being unable to examine their claims, regarded the clergy with a superstitious veneration, considering them as a sort of inferior divinities, while they pretended to possess the power of absolving men from their sins. Hence, many of the princes and nobles, who had spent their lives in rapine and murder to acquire wealth, gave large donations to the priests to avoid the penalties annexed to their crimes, and to escape the torments of the wicked in the future world. These gifts were commonly called “the price of transgression for the redemption of souls.”

This shocking practice enriched the clergy to an enormous extent! Emperors, kings, and princes, signalized their superstitious reverence for the clergy by investing bishops, churches, and monasteries, with the possession of whole provinces, cities, castles, and fortresses, together with all the rights and privileges of sovereignty. Thus ecclesiastics were created judges, counts, marquises, dukes, legislators, and sovereigns; and they

not only gave laws to nations, but upon many occasions they also gave battle to their neighbours, at the head of numerous armies of their own raising !

The Pope still maintained his superiority among the bishops; and his pre-eminence was universally conceded, as essential to the usurped domination of the other prelates. The western barbarians, who received the gospel, looked upon the bishop of Rome as a kind of successor to their Arch-Druid. And as that tremendous priest had enjoyed, under the darkness of paganism, a boundless authority, and had been looked upon with a superstitious veneration, which degenerated into terror; so these uninstructed people willingly transferred to the chief of the bishops the same honour and the same authority that had been formerly vested in their Arch-Druid.

The consequences of this strange opinion were most pernicious, as the profound homage of a deluded people increased the arrogance of the Roman Pontiff to an enormous height, and gave to the Pope that long-sought despotic authority, in civil and political affairs, which was unknown to former ages. Hence arose the horrible notion, that all who were excommunicated by the Pope forfeited thereby, not only their rights as citizens, but even the common claims of humanity.

The papal excommunication was extended even to kings, and that in the eighth century. Under this terrible sentence, the king, the ruler, the husband, the father, nay, even the *man*, was degraded—driven from society, doomed to contempt, and to the blackness of darkness for ever! This pernicious opinion was, in succeeding ages, the fatal source of wars, rebellions, massacres, and assassinations without number.

There were, indeed, several reformers raised up in the church during this century; but not to effect any general improvement, much less to restore Christianity to its divine simplicity. The increase of ceremonies was attended with the introduction into the churches of pictures and images of our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and of the saints; and in this century the worship of them became general, supported by the Popes. But Leo III., Constantine V., Leo IV., and Capronymas, Greek emperors, abhorring the practice, laboured to destroy idolatry. Dr. Haweis observes, “ When the cause

of image-worship appeared nearly extinct in the East, a revolution of the most horrid kind rendered the Roman Pontiff triumphant. A cup of poison ministered by IRENE, the empress, to her husband, opened a way for her holding the reins of government during the minority of her son ; and this auspicious moment was seized by Adrian the Pope to league himself with this monster of a woman.” But in opposition to the Popes, councils were held, by whom the degrading custom was condemned. Besides these, Charles the Great, emperor of Germany and France, held a council at Frankfort, consisting of three hundred bishops, who came to the same decision against the worship of images.

This great monarch manifested a commendable zeal for the reformation of the church ; but it was exceedingly limited in its exercise, by reason of his superstitious veneration for the Pope. For the promotion of religion, Charlemagne, for by this title Charles the Great of France is generally known in history, established several universities, and published many books. These writings declare the sufficiency of the Scriptures, as the rule of faith and practice ; that they ought to be read by all Christians ; that God alone ought to be worshipped ; that public prayers ought to be made in a known language ; that the bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper are symbols of the body and blood of Christ ; and that the justification of sinners before God is through the righteousness of Christ, and not by their own works. Most of these sentiments were partly or totally opposite to the doctrines which were taught at Rome.

Charlemagne had for his preceptor and counsellor Alcuin, a justly celebrated Englishman, at whose suggestion the learned were patronized ; and by whose pen, principally, these books were written. It will be natural to desire to learn something more concerning a countryman so eminent as Alcuin. We observe, therefore, this great man was a native of Yorkshire, and educated by Egbert, the archbishop, whom, in his letters, he called his “beloved master.” Being sent by Offa, the Saxon king of Mercia, which included Yorkshire, on an embassy to Charles, the French monarch conceived a great esteem for him, and prevailed on him to settle in his court, to become his own instructor, and president of an academy in the

imperial palace. After having spent many years in the most intimate friendship with that prince, in founding and supporting several universities, and in other useful labours, he retired to his Abbey of St. Martin of Tours. Here he kept up a correspondence with the emperor; from which it appears, that Alcuin at least was animated with the most ardent love of religion and learning, and constantly employed in contriving and executing some design for their advancement. Charles often solicited Alcuin to return to court, but he always excused himself, and nothing could induce him to leave his retirement, in which he died, A. D. 804. Charlemagne died A. D. 814. The Christian teacher left behind him a reputation worthy of his profession: but the monarch, though a patron of learning and religion, a character stained with several of the blackest crimes.

Besides Alcuin, and at the beginning of the century, Bede flourished; the earliest ecclesiastical historian of England, and contemporary with Bede, was Boniface, a zealous missionary in Germany.

Bede, the brightest ornament of the eighth century, was a monk of Durham: he was placed in a monastery at seven years of age, and educated with such care, that he was esteemed a prodigy in that ignorant and illiterate age. His knowledge of Greek and Hebrew was considerable; his learning for the times profound; his application incredible; his piety sincere; and his modesty exemplary. He was universally respected, admired, and consulted, during his life; and his writings have been a monument to perpetuate his memory since his death. He appears to have given himself wholly to his studies, to the instruction of a few noble pupils, and to the offices of public and private devotion. His literary and biblical labours were prodigious. Twenty-seven treatises of his are still extant, consisting of translations, commentaries, and expositions of books of the Scriptures. Almost all the knowledge we possess of the early state of Christianity in Britain, is derived from his Ecclesiastical History. The fame of his learning having reached Rome, he was urgently desired by Pope Sergius to pay him a visit; which, however, he does not appear to have accepted. Anticipating his speedy dissolution, he said, “If

my Maker please, I will go from the flesh to Him who, when I was not, formed me out of nothing. My soul desires to see Christ, my King, in his beauty." He completed a Saxon translation of the Gospel by John on the day of his death, and singing, "Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," he expired A. D. 735, leaving his contemporaries to eulogize him as "the wise Saxon," and his posterity to call him "the venerable Bede."

Boniface was a zealous preacher of Devonshire : his name was Winfrid, and he was brought up in a monastery. He made considerable progress in learning, and was regarded as an eminent preacher. Influenced by the example of Willebrord, he ardently longed to be employed as a missionary to the pagans. He refused the office and honour of abbot, that he might devote himself to this work on the Continent. He went to Rome to ask an appointment to this field of labour, and Pope Gregory II. gave him an unlimited commission. His ministry was successful, and he had several English colleagues to assist him. As the reward of his labours, the Pope consecrated him archbishop of the German churches, and changed his name to Boniface. He continued his connexion with England by an epistolary correspondence ; from which it appears that his knowledge of the Scriptures was considerable, his piety sincere, and his zeal laborious for the reformation of the clergy, and for the conversion of the infidels. He ordained a successor to his clerical dignity, which he resigned to go on a mission into East Friesland, where he and his companions, fifty-two in all, were murdered by the pagans, A. D. 755. This was the fifty-fifth of his mission, and the seventy-fifth of his age.

This was an age of missionaries. Virgilius, an Irishman, was zealous and successful in destroying idolatry in an extensive degree in Germany. King Pepin made him bishop of Saltzburgh. Rumold, a native of England or Ireland, laboured to promote Christianity in the neighbourhood of Brabant. He was murdered A. D. 775. Villehod, an Englishman, from his success, was called the Apostle of Saxony. He copied Paul's epistles, and paid much regard to the Scriptures. He laboured thirty-five years, and died in Friesland, bishop of

Breman. Liefuvyn, a missionary from Britain, laboured zealously in several parts of France and the Netherlands. Ferinin, a Frenchman, preached Christianity under peculiar difficulties, in Bavaria, Alsace, and Switzerland.

It can scarcely be doubted, that some of the saving doctrines of Jesus Christ were truly taught by the missionaries of this century; yet it must be admitted, that these zealous men, and their itinerant labours, were far less of a Christian character than at first may be supposed. Some judicious ecclesiastical historians declare that the authority of the Pope, and the superstitious ceremonies of the age, constituted the principal subject of their ministry, instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and it is certain, that they have too much reason for making such a declaration.

In this century originated that despicable ceremony of kissing the Pope's foot, instead of his hand, when his favour is granted in an audience with him; and the first appointment of church-yards, as places for the interment of the dead.

CHAPTER VIII.

CENTURY IX.

Mohammedism prevails—Image-worship—Ignorance of the clergy—Vices of the Popes—Alfred the Great—His piety, learning, and labours—Claude of Turin—Godeschalculus—Ansarius, a missionary—Cyril—Methodius—Rise of transubstantiation—Paulicians.

THE partial revival of learning in the eighth century in France was but of little service to the cause of Christianity; for barbarism, ignorance, and superstition, continued to prevail, and even to increase. Mohammedism reigned, in all its savage bigotry, over the finest parts of Asia and Africa, and several kingdoms of Europe; and a prodigious number of professedly Christian families embraced the religion of the conquerors, that they might retain in security the possession of their property. There does not appear to have been, in this century, one emperor or bishop of Constantinople, or a single Pope, deserving of notice on account of his piety.

The ignorance and corruption of the church preserved the worship of images ; and this species of idolatry increased to an incredible extent the number of canonized saints. This became a new source of priestly abuse and of pious frauds. The resources of fable and forgery were exhausted by the priests, in celebrating the exploits and miracles of the saints : and for the purpose of consecrating public buildings and private habitations, their bones were sought for in distant countries, by long voyages and with solemn prayers, under the direction of a designing clergy, who derived immense riches by those articles of sacred merchandise.

Nothing could equal the veneration that was paid, in that dark age, to those who devoted themselves to the sacred gloom of a convent. Abbots and monks, in great numbers, were drawn by kings and emperors from their cloisters, to employ their talents as ambassadors and ministers of State. Through a superstitious melancholy and ignorant devotion, several nobles and kings, in this century, forgetting their proper dignity, affected that contempt for the world and its grandeur, as to abandon their treasures, their honours, and their thrones, with a view to devote themselves to God, according to their false notions of pleasing Him. Others, who did not profess so great a degree of self-denial, endeavoured to make amends for this in their last hours ; for when they perceived the approach of death, they put on the monastic habit, that they might be regarded as belonging to the fraternity, and be entitled to the fervent prayers and spiritual succours of their devoted brethren.

It is probable that there existed some sincere piety among the monks, though there is scarcely any rational evidence of it on record. Great numbers of them were sunk into a superstitious indolence, and self-righteous stupidity ; while others were abandoned to the most unbounded licentiousness, so as to call for the authority of kings to attempt their reformation.

The clergy in this century were exceedingly degenerate. The ignorance of the sacred order, even in Europe, was in general so deplorable, that great numbers of them, even bishops, could neither write nor read ! How such unqualified persons could gain admission to the ministerial office may at

first appear surprising ; and the ordinary methods of procedure in this case, when considered, will show how grievously Christianity had been corrupted. The patrons of churches, unwilling to submit their disorderly conduct to the faithful censure of upright pastors, industriously sought the most abject, ignorant, and worthless ecclesiastics ; especially if they were persons of rank to whom they committed the care of souls. Historians of the highest authority record, that the sons of noblemen, through want of talents, activity, or courage, being rendered incapable of appearing with dignity in the cabinet, or with honour in the field, were led to turn their views towards the church, in which to gain a distinguished place among its rulers ; and thus they became a contagious example of stupidity and vice to the inferior clergy.

The enormous vices of most of the Popes, in this century, have served to transmit their names with infamy to our age. But their vices did not form any material obstacle to their elevation in these miserable times, nor hinder them from extending their influence, and augmenting their authority, both in Church and State. They continued to deprive the European princes of all authority in ecclesiastical affairs, and greatly to diminish the power of the bishops, by encouraging appeals against one another to their own courts. Elated with their overgrown prosperity, and arrogant through the daily accessions that were made to their authority, they now succeeded in persuading many, that the bishop of Rome was constituted and appointed by Jesus Christ supreme legislator and judge of the church universal. It was, therefore, dangerous for any prince to dispute the papal decision or opinion.

The late exertions of Charlemagne were not quite lost. His liberality to learned men, and his zealous endeavours to advance religion, encouraged many to pursue scriptural truth : but the circumstances of the age were unfavourable to the extensive diffusion of divine knowledge ; and as these illustrious luminaries of the church departed, ignorance and superstition soon again overspread the provinces, and carried with them a train of pernicious errors.

In England, learning and genuine piety most lamentably declined ; in a great measure, through the desolating incursions

of the savage Danes. Alfred the Great complained, that when he ascended the throne, there was not a priest, from the river Humber to the Thames, who could explain to the people the service of the church, which was then in Latin.

There were, even in this dark age, several ministers or reformers of eminence: but those who appear to have rendered the most essential service to the church, were Claude, an evangelical bishop of Turin; Godeschaleus, a pious reviver of Scripture doctrines; Anscarius, a zealous missionary to Denmark and Sweden; and Alfred the Great, the Saxon king of England.

Several particulars of this excellent monarch must be here recorded. The civil and military history of Alfred the Great, with which our young readers will do well to become familiar, does not lie within our province. Alfred was born A. D. 849. All historians agree in commending him as a man of extraordinary genius; and as one of the most valiant, wise, and excellent of kings. It is generally allowed, that he laid the first foundation of the present happy constitution of England; and that to him we are indebted for that righteous and admirable custom of Trial by Jury. He divided the country into shires, with various other excellent regulations, which were so effectual, that it is said he caused bracelets of gold to be hung up in the high ways, as a challenge to robbers; and they remained untouched. In private life, Alfred was the most amiable man in the kingdom; of so equal a temper, that he never suffered either sadness or unbecoming gaiety to enter his mind; but that he appeared always of a calm, yet cheerful disposition, familiar to his friends, just to his enemies, kind and tender to all. These excellent fruits sprung from his genuine piety, whose maturity in Alfred appeared extraordinary. We are told, that he was twelve years of age before a master could be procured to teach him the elements of learning; and, feeling the misery of ignorance, he devoted all his energies to acquire a proficiency of knowledge. He was a great economist of time; which he divided by means of wax candles, marked by inches, devoting one third part of it to meals and sleep; a like portion to the business of his government; and the same to studies and devotion. He lamented

the gross ignorance of the clergy, complaining as we have before related; and for their use he translated many of the most suitable books he could procure, and of which he sent them copies. He wrote several books on moral, and political, and religious subjects; and translated the Ecclesiastical History by Venerable Bede, and the Book of Psalms, in completing which he was arrested by the hand of death. Some suppose that he completed a translation of the whole Bible. To advance learning, Alfred invited several learned men into England; he founded the university of Oxford, and laboured to promote the knowledge of the English language among all ranks, taking the nobility under his own instruction. Alfred died A. D. 900, having immortalized his name as an author, as a Christian, and as a king.

Claude was a native of Spain, and so eminent for his attainments, that when but young, he was introduced to the emperor Lewis the Meek, and made his chaplain. This monarch, considering Claude a fit person to stop the progress of image-worship, and to diffuse the true doctrine of the gospel, made him bishop of Turin, A. D. 817. In this station he laboured with great success in the advancement of scriptural truth, both by preaching and by commentaries. He ordered all the images, and even the crosses, to be thrown out of the churches, and committed to the flames. His writings assert the perfect equality of all the apostles with Peter, and declare Jesus Christ to be the only true Head of the church; he condemns the doctrine of human merit, and denies the validity of human traditions, as authoritative in matters of faith; he teaches that we are justified by faith only in Jesus Christ, and disallows praying to the dead, or seeking their prayers for ourselves. In these, and various other respects, he opposed the reigning abominations, being protected by the French court. He continued bishop of Turin above twenty years, and died A. D. 839.

Godeschalcus was a Saxon of illustrious rank, and educated a monk, to which he was devoted by his parents, as the true way of salvation. He applied himself diligently to the study of the Scriptures, and to the writings of Augustine, by which he made considerable progress in the knowledge of the gospel.

He was solicitous to leave his seclusion for more active labours in the ministry: but Rabanus Maurus opposed his wishes, and compelled him to remain in his monastery. Hence a contest arose between them, in which the emperor Lewis was obliged to interpose. Godeschalcus left his confinement, and laboured assiduously under the patronage of a powerful nobleman of the emperor Lothaire's court. His lectures attracted the serious attention of the bishop of Verona, the bishop of Troyes, and the archbishop of Lyons, with many others of eminence; some of whom warmly embraced his opinions. His preaching and popularity awakened the envy and enmity of his opponent Maurus, who accused him of heresy before a synod, held in Mentz, of which himself was archbishop. By calumny and misrepresentation of his doctrines, he procured his condemnation. For punishment he was sent to his diocesan Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, by whom he had been ordained. Hincmar entered into the spirit of his brother of Mentz, being equally an enemy to this scriptural disturber of the church. In a council at Rheims, called for the purpose, his condemnation was confirmed, with every insult and with aggravated injustice, though his doctrines, which he still defended, were not refuted. In vain the injured preacher appealed to the Scriptures and to the writings of Augustine, in support of his opinions: such arguments, and his unimpeached integrity, possessed no weight with his bigoted enemies. As a heretic, he was degraded from the priesthood, and publicly whipped till covered with blood, and then thrown into prison. During his sufferings, a paper, containing a list of Scripture texts, which he had collected in justification of his doctrines, was brought to him, with an order to cast it into the fire. Overcome with pain he let fall the paper, but continued firm in his belief. He attested, with his dying breath, his faith in the doctrines he had preached, and the consolations he derived from them. He died in prison, A. D. 870.

During the confinement of Godeschalcus, his system, with his defences of it, were examined; by which means many able supporters were raised up, and his innocence was declared. Irritated by such consequences, Hincmar procured a further confirmation of the unrighteous sentence, which contributed

yet more to build up what he laboured to destroy ; for a body of ecclesiastics, many of whom were bishops, assembled in council at Valence, under the archbishop of Lyons, to vindicate the martyr and his doctrines. In this vindication, which was seven years after his condemnation, and fifteen before his death, several surrounding provinces concurred.

Anscarius, or Ansgar, was sent by Lewis the Meek, as a missionary to the Swedes, in compliance with their request. His successful labours induced the emperor to appoint Anscarius archbishop of Hamburg, and of all the northern provinces. The Pope confirmed the appointment, as adapted to advance his authority. We have but very brief notices of this zealous minister, and of his various labours. He erected a hospital at Bremen, in Germany, in which the sick and strangers were relieved. He employed his influence in favour of slaves and captives, many of whom he redeemed from their chains and bondage to the enjoyment of liberty. It is said of him, that he never engaged in any undertaking without first recommending himself to God by prayer. A passage from one of his letters to some ministers, and the only fragment of his writings, gives us a fine specimen of a Christian spirit.—“ I beg your earnest prayers to God for the growth and fruitfulness of this mission among the pagans. For, by the grace of God, the church of Christ is now founded both in Denmark and Sweden ; and the pastors discharge their office without molestation. May God Almighty make you all partakers of this work in godly charity, and joint-heirs with Christ in heavenly glory.” After labouring in the northern provinces thirty-nine years, he finished his pious course A. D. 865.

Cyril, by some called Constantine, and Methodius, appear to have been successful missionaries among the people of several provinces on the banks of the Danube, called Bulgarians, Selavonians, and Chazari : but our accounts of them are very imperfect.

The other events of this century, which are most worthy of being recorded are,

First, the rise of *transubstantiation*, which is the pretended change of the bread and wine, in the Lord’s Supper, into the real body and blood of Christ. The origin of this

notion, our readers will do well to remember, as many of our English martyrs suffered for denying this absurd doctrine.

Secondly, the dreadful persecutions of the Paulicians by Theodora, a Greek empress. The Paulicians arose, as we have seen, about A. D. 660. They continued increasing until the ninth century, under the Greek emperors; but not without persecutions. At this time they were very numerous, and as they rejected the ceremonies and the authority of the clergy generally, these, incensed at their presumption, charged them with holding heretical doctrines, and determined on their destruction. The empress Theodora, who was regent of the empire during the minority of her son, and the zealous patron of image-worship, readily entered into their measures; and by her orders, it is computed, that not less than a hundred thousand were destroyed by the gibbet, the fire, and the sword.

Pope Nicolas congratulated Theodora on her zeal and success in obedience to his commands. Those who escaped sought refuge, for the most part, among the Mohammedans; and thus being united with their protectors, their successors were characterized by little except their martial spirit, having lost their veneration for the doctrines and institutions of their founder, as taught in the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER IX.

CENTURY X.

Attempt to extend Christianity—Otho the Great—Various missions—True church appears almost lost—Arnulph—Pope Sylvester—The end of the world expected—Rosary and Crown.

THE name and profession of Christianity were extended in the tenth century, by various missions, both of conquest and persuasion. Its corrupted form was established in most of the northern provinces of Europe; but its genuine principles were little regarded, or even understood.

The Nestorians in Chaldea extended their missionary labours into Tartary, and converted many of the Turks of Karit, on the northern borders of China. John, the prince of the

country, being baptized, assumed the modest name of Presbyter. Hence his successors, for several centuries, are known by the name of *Prester John*.

Wlodomir, duke of Russia and Muscovy, A. D. 961, married Anne, sister of Basilius II., Grecian emperor; and this pious princess at length prevailed on her husband to embrace the Christian faith. He was baptized A. D. 987, and assumed the name of his brother-in-law Basilius. The Russians followed the example of their princee. Thus Christianity was established in that empire, as part of the Greek church; and these two sovereigns are venerated as saints by the Russians.

Bulosudes and Gylas, two Turkish chiefs, were baptized at Constantinople, on a profession of their faith. The former became an apostate. Gylas continued faithful, and employed Hierotheus, a learned prelate, to proselyte his people. He gave his daughter Sarotta in marriage to Geysa, a Hungarian chief, whom she persuaded to embrace the doctrines of Christ. Adalbert, archbishop of Prague, encouraged him in his profession, and baptized his son Stephen, who perfected the work of his father and grandfather, by fixing bishops with large revenues in various places, and erecting magnificent temples for divine worship. By the influence of instructions and threatenings, rewards and punishments, his subjects were induced to abandon their debasing idolatry.

Otho the Great, emperor of Germany, contributed in a signal manner to establish Christianity through his empire. He laboured to abolish the remaining idolatry of his people. He appointed bishops in several places, and erected and endowed the bishoprics of Brandeburgh, Havelburgh, Missen, Magdeburgh, and Naumburgh; and ordered that schools should be established for the education of youth, in almost every city. But the superstition of his empress Adelaid, and the deplorable ignorance of the times, deluded this pious and generous prince, so that he loaded the clergy with riches and honours, as the most acceptable offering to God. Otho the Great died A. D. 873, having been twenty-six years king of Germany, and ten more as emperor.

Rollo, a pirate from Norway, seized the province of France, which Charles the Simple agreed to yield to him, and to give

him his daughter in marriage, on condition of his embracing Christianity. The proposition being advantageous, the whole predatory band received baptism with their leader, who took the name of Robert, and from these new possessors the province was called Normandy.

Micislaus, duke of Poland, hearing the reports of Christianity, by some of his people, who had invited preachers from Bohemia and Moravia, married Dambrouca, daughter of Bolisllaus, duke of Bohemia. Pope John XIII., having heard of it, sent to him a numerous train of ecclesiastics, whose labours being seconded by penal laws, the whole population became nominally Christian, and two archbishops and seven bishops were consecrated as a part of the Romish establishment.

Denmark received the Christian faith during the reign of Gormo, whose queen Tyra afforded some encouragement to its professors. Gormo was succeeded by Harold his son, who was compelled by Otho the Great, A.D. 848, to submit to baptism, together with his wife and son Swein, from Adal dagus, archbishop of Hamburgh, who accompanied the emperor in his expedition. Otho granted peace to Harold on condition that his subjects should embrace Christianity; which being accepted, Adal dagus and Poppon took measures with Harold for proselyting the Cimbrians and Danes. Swein became an apostate; but being driven from his throne, he was an exile in Scotland, where he reflected on his infidel folly, returned to the truth, regained his kingdom, and became zealous in the cause of Christianity.

Hagen Adersteen, the king of Norway, who had been educated among the English, attempted in vain, about A.D. 933, to evangelize his subjects; Haco, one of his successors, being induced by Harold, king of Denmark, to follow his example; but in vain. Olaus Tryg-gueson, having been converted to Christianity in England, travelled from province to province, with a body of soldiers, and performed the office of missionary and apostle. In Drontheim the people rose against him; but he prevailed; and, having dragged the statue of Thor, their deity, from its sacred place, they burnt it in the sight of its worshippers. Guthebald, an English priest, became the most

eminent teacher of the Norwegians. From Norway the name of Jesus was published through the adjacent countries, the Orkney Islands, Iceland, and even to Old Greenland.

In this age the true church appeared to be almost lost, and pure Christianity overwhelmed with absurd and idolatrous ceremonies. By one of the most celebrated advocates of popery this is called "an iron age, barren of all goodness; a leaden age, abounding in all wickedness; and a dark age, remarkable above all others for the scarcity of writers and men of learning." History records in this century but few struggles against the prevailing abominations; and those few almost wholly unsuccessful. The most eminent of those whose names are mentioned, was Arnulph, bishop of Orleans; and of him we know but little, though he appears to have been a man of sincere piety, from a few words preserved in one of his discourses. They seem to have been delivered at a synod, of which he was president. He says, "O deplorable Rome, who, in the days of our forefathers, didst produce so many burning and shining lights, thou hast brought forth in our times only dismal darkness, worthy of the detestation of posterity. What shall we do, or what counsel shall we take? The gospel tells of a barren fig-tree, and of the Divine patience exercised towards it. Let us bear with our primates as long as we can, and in the mean time seek for spiritual food where it is to be found. Certainly there are some in this holy assembly who can testify that in Belgium and Germany, both which are near us, there may be found real pastors, and eminent men in religion. Far better would it be, if the authorities of kings did not prevent, that we should seek in those parts for the judgment of bishops, than in that venality which weighs all decrees by the quantity of money. What think you, reverend fathers, of this man, the Pope, placed on a lofty throne, shining in purple and gold? Whom do you account him? If destitute of love, and puffed up with the pride of knowledge only, he is antichrist, sitting in the temple of God."

The state of things in the church, according to Arnulph, must have been truly deplorable; and both in the eastern and western provinces the clergy were, in general, composed of a most

worthless set of men; shamefully illiterate, stupid, and ignorant, especially in matters of true religion. They were equally enslaved to sensuality and superstition, and capable of the most abominable and flagitious deeds. Except Sylvester, the history of the Popes that lived in this century exhibits a dreadful series of the most atrocious and complicated crimes. This is confessed by all writers, even by those of the Romish communion.

Sylvester is not celebrated for his eminent piety, but for his superior learning. He was a native of France, and, possessing a genius extensive and sublime, he went into Spain, to study under the Arabian teachers. On account of his learning, he became preceptor to the emperor Otho III., by whose influence he was elevated to the popedom, A. D. 999. His principal endeavours were directed to revive letters; and, to facilitate the study of his favourite science, he published a small treatise on Geometry. But the mathematical figures of lines, angles, curves, and circles, raised a suspicion that he was a magician; and the monks condemned him, dreading his supposed intercourse with Satan!

The monks in the east, though grossly ignorant, observed a degree of decency, and reverenced the forms of religion; but in the west, ignorance distinguished them, and they disregarded all subordination and discipline.

Till after the commencement of the eleventh century, it was almost universally believed that St. John had foretold the consummation of the present state to take place at the close of the tenth century;—that Satan was to be let loose among men;—that antichrist was to come;—and that the conflagration of the world would soon follow. Incredible numbers, therefore, abandoned their worldly occupations, connexions, and property, and travelled to Palestine, where they expected to meet Jesus Christ. Others devoted themselves to the churches, and to the priests, to perform for them the meanest services. Public buildings were suffered to decay, as no longer necessary. Eclipses, or any remarkable appearances, contributed to the general terror and dismay which tormented the superstitious minds of miserable mankind.

The other events connected with religion deserving remark,

in this age, are, First, the institution of the rosary and crown of the Virgin Mary. It is a string of beads, by which the Roman Catholics reckon the number of prayers which they offer to the Virgin Mary; the rosary consisting of fifteen repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and a hundred and fifty salutations of the blessed Virgin: the crown consists of six or seven repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and six or seven times ten salutations. Second, the application of Pope Sylvester, in the last year of the tenth century, to the Christian princes of Europe and the East, to undertake a war against the Saracens, for the purpose of recovering from them the sacred land of Palestine.

CHAPTER X.

CENTURY XI.

Ravages of the Saracens—Various missions in Europe—Asia—The true church nearly extinct—Cathari, or Puritans—Arrogant claims of the Popes—Degradation of the emperor Henry IV., by Pope Gregory VII.—Alfric—Alphage—Anselm—Margaret, queen of Scotland—Crusades—Transubstantiation.

THE general state of the church in the eleventh century was still more wretched than in the preceding age. In Africa, where numerous churches flourished in the times of Augustine, the inhuman Saracens almost extirpated the very name of Christian ordinances. The Christians in Asia and the east of Europe, generally, submitted to their conquering arms, and were reduced to the most deplorable condition. As to the church in the west, its rulers, in almost every instance, exhibited in their conduct dreadful examples of the most shocking crimes. The most scandalous irregularities distinguished the greater part of the monastic orders, and the grossest ignorance and corruption reigned amongst all ranks of men. The ineffectual efforts which were made to promote a reformation, died at their commencement. Learning was almost universally sunk to the lowest degree; and the few pious men who arose seemed to know no better way of producing a reform, than founding new monastic orders, with still stricter rules: but these, in their turn, soon degenerated. In several places, learning

somewhat revived ; and the influence of the gospel was enjoyed by a few, who made some feeble endeavours to recover the power of declining godliness, by diffusing scriptural knowledge : but the violent prejudices of a barbarous age rendered all innovations in the form of religion dangerous, or even fatal, to their authors.

The sovereigns of Hungary, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, employed several zealous missionaries to reclaim their savage subjects from idolatry, and to teach them the doctrine of Christ, and their efforts were sanctioned with penal laws.

Adelbert, bishop of Prague in Bohemia, about A. D. 996, had laboured among the barbarous Prussians : but he was put to death by the murderous lance of Siggo, a pagan priest. To revenge his death, Boleslaus, king of Poland, commenced a destructive war upon them, and by his victorious arms dragooned them into the Romish forms of Christianity. Boniface, a priest of noble birth, with Bruno and eighteen assistants, entered into the work thus began : but they were cruelly massacred : from which we may learn, not only the ferocity of the Prussians, but that the missionaries were far from resembling the apostles of Christ.

Some English priests were sent into the northern provinces, by king Ethelred, at the desire of Olaus II., king of Sweden. Sigefrid, archdeacon of York, was one of them, and his labours being successful he was appointed bishop of Wexia, in East Gothland. He left his nephews in his charge, while he proceeded to convert the infidels in West Gothland. His nephews were murdered by the pagan nobility, but Sigefrid would not consent to the crime being revenged by the king : he died A. D. 1002, in the second year of his mission. Gotebald, another English missionary, became bishop in Norway. Ulfrid, another, laboured in Germany and Sweden ; and preaching against the idol Thor, which he began to cut down with a hatchet, he was slain by the pagans A. D. 1028.

The Nestorians in the East seem to have acted on purer principles, in prosecuting their missionary labours. Among the vast hordes of the northern Tartars, in the provinces of Turkestan, Casgar, Genda, and Tangut, great multitudes were brought to a profession of the Christian faith. Metropolitans,

with many inferior prelates, were established in these provinces, under the patriarch of Bagdad : from which we may conclude, there was a prodigious number of those who bore the Christian name, in those countries which are now sunk in idolatry, or absorbed by Mohammedism.

Where we are to look for the true church of Christ, in the eleventh century, it may be difficult to determine. It can scarcely be discovered by any of its divine features. Probably there was not a little genuine godliness among the Nestorians. In Britain there appeared, indeed, a few, by whom the doctrines of Christ were esteemed precious. Several also were distinguished in Germany and France, especially near Turin, and in the valleys of Piedmont. The supposed remains of the persecuted Paulicians found shelter in Europe ; and as a term of reproach they were called Cathari, or Puritans. But the true witnesses of Jesus Christ, in this age, appear to have been few in number and little known.

The lofty pretensions of the Pope were still maintained and those ecclesiastical usurpers arrived, in this century, at the most elevated point of their dominion. They now received the extravagant titles of "Universal Fathers," and "Masters of the world." Notwithstanding vigorous opposition from several sovereigns, they carried their insolent pretensions so far, as to proclaim themselves "Lords of the universe, arbiters of the fate of nations, and supreme rulers of the kings and princes of the earth!" To notice a particular instance of the abominable assumption of the Pope cannot fail to be instructive, however it may shock the feelings of a Christian. From among others, we select the ignominious degradation of the emperor Henry IV. For opposing the arrogant claims of Hildebrand, or, as he is called, Gregory VII., the emperor was excommunicated. The haughty pontiff excited the princes of the neighbouring states to make war upon their monarch.

Being terrified at the anathemas of the Pope, he was persuaded to throw himself into his holy hands, to yield to his clemency, and await his decision. Filled with the superstition of the times, Henry consented ; and as it was prescribed to him, he submitted to stand, with his empress and family, at the gates of the fortress of Canusium, during three days, in the open air,

in a severe February, A. D. 1077, with his feet bare, his head uncovered, and with no other raiment than a piece of coarse woollen cloth thrown over his body to cover his nakedness. The fourth day, he was with difficulty admitted to the presence of that lordly priest, who, with much ceremony granted him absolution; but forbid him ever after to assume the title or ensigns of sovereignty! Such a daring outrage upon humanity as well as royalty excited universal abhorrence; but none had the courage to utter a reproof directly to the terrible anti-christ!

Avarice was a feature in the papacy as prevailing as it was hateful; and the traffic in reliques afforded it ample gratification. "Kings, princes, and wealthy prelates, purchased pieces of the cross, or whole legs and arms of the apostles; while others were obliged to be contented with the toes and fingers of inferior saints. Agelnoth, archbishop of Canterbury, when he was at Rome, A. D. 1021, purchased from the Pope an arm of St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, for six thousand pounds' weight of silver, and sixty pounds' weight of gold."

There were, however, a few distinguished for piety and learning in this dark age: but the usefulness of the most eminent in this century was exceedingly limited, on account of the prevailing ignorance and superstition. The most deserving to be remembered by us appear to have been Alfric, Alphage, and Anscln, archbishops of Canterbury; and Margaret, an English princess, who was married to Malcolm, king of Scotland.

Alfric, or Elfric, was the archbishop at the beginning of the century, though we know but little concerning him. At that time, the use of the Latin language in public worship prevailed; affording no edification to the ignorant people: but in one of the canons of a council, at which Alfric was president, it was ordained, that the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the gospel lessons for the day, should be explained to the people in the English language. In this dark age, such a regulation, if practically observed, must have been highly beneficial: but to what extent it was adopted and acted upon we have no information.

Alphage succeeded Alfric, and he appears to have been a

truly pious man. When the Danes were besieging Canterbury, his friends in vain entreated Alphege to flee for his life. He replied, "God forbid, that I should tarnish my character by so inglorious a conduct; and should be afraid of going to heaven, because a violent death lies across the passage. I have been the instrument of drawing over several considerable persons among these Danes to the gospel; if this be a fault, I shall be happy in suffering for it. I mean, therefore, to stand the shock, and submit to the order of Divine Providence." The Danes proceeded to the most horrid barbarities with the women and children; on which Alphege expostulated with them. "The cradle can afford no triumph for soldiers. It would be better for you to exercise your vengeance upon me, whose death may give some celebrity to your names. Remember, some of your troops have, through my means, been brought over to the faith of Christ, and I have frequently rebuked you for your acts of injustice." Alphege was seized and imprisoned for several months; and as he could not pay three thousand pounds, the price of his redemption, they cruelly treated and murdered him at Greenwich, A. D. 1013.

Anselm was eminent for learning, and he is regarded as the ablest theologian of the eleventh century. He became pious in his youth, and was successively a monk in a monastery at Bee, in Normandy, then prior, and afterwards abbot. His reputation for knowledge and piety induced William Rufus, son of William the Conqueror, to appoint him archbishop of Canterbury. In vain he refused the honour with many tears and entreaties. Being consecrated to his new dignity, he was led away, by his invincible zeal for the Pope, to labour with all his might to maintain the dangerous privileges of the episcopal order, and to retain their immense revenues; which were coveted, and sometimes seized, by necessitous kings. Thus, from his consecration to his death, he was engaged in a series of contentions for the prerogative of the church, against that of the crown. He died A. D. 1109. The priests called him a resolute saint, and canonized him. The works of Anselm are numerous, and they contributed to the revival of learning. They teach the purity of evangelical doctrine; and his devotional pieces breathe a solid and elevated piety; some

of which are in our times esteemed. He laboured to prevent the custom of selling men in the markets as cattle, and prepared an instructive manual for the visitation of the sick. The full extent of his usefulness, as a sound and pious divine, was prevented by the contests respecting ecclesiastical powers.

Margaret was sister to Edgar, the last of the Saxon princes in England; and they both found a retreat in Scotland, when William the Norman conquered this country. Malcolm, king of Scotland, married Margaret; and, by her piety and humanity, his ferocious spirit was greatly tamed. She effected a considerable reformation in the court, and in the kingdom generally, especially in regard to the Sabbath. She took the most diligent care in educating her children, the fruits of which appeared in their lives. Her chaplain says, “She would discourse with me concerning the sweetness of everlasting life, in such a manner as to draw tears from my eyes.” Her husband was slain at the siege of Alnwick, in Northumberland, while she was sick; and which she survived only four days. She was observed to say, “I thank thee, O Lord, that this great affliction is evidently sent to purify me from my sins. O Lord Jesus Christ, who by thy death hast given life to the world, deliver me from evil.” She died A. D. 1093.

The most memorable event of the eleventh century is the commencement of the Crusades. They were dreadful wars carried on by the united forces of all the Christian princes of Europe. Multitudes of the clergy united in the enterprises directed against the Saracens and Turks, for the recovery of Palestine, the scene of the Saviour’s miracles and death. These wars continued nearly three centuries, and in their prosecution several millions of Europeans perished!

Transubstantiation was carried to its height in the eleventh century. A mysterious and saving efficacy had always been attributed, by the superstitious, to the receiving of the Lord’s Supper. The priests encouraged this delusion, as a principal means of their wealth. In the ninth century, it began to be pretended that, after consecration, the bread and wine were changed into the body and blood of Christ. This rising notion was condemned by Claude, bishop of Turin. In the eleventh century, the error being still cherished, was vigorously opposed

by Berenger, a doctor of the academy at Tours. For this he was most grievously persecuted, and at length, by a council under Pope Gregory VII., he was induced to declare upon oath, that he believed that the bread and wine in the eucharist are, by the mysterious influence of the priestly prayer, and recital of the words of Christ, substantially changed into his true, proper, and vivifying body and blood, in their essential properties. Berenger died A. D. 1089, bewailing this dissimulation, at Rome.

CHAPTER XI.

CENTURY XII.

Wickedness of the Popes and clergy—Religion nearly lost—Prester John—Missionaries—Revival of religion—Cathari and Albigenses—Morals and doctrine of these Dissenters—Their persecutions at Oxford—Peter Waldo—He translates the New Testament—Waldenses—Crusades—St. Bernard—Peter Lombard—Cambridge University—Insolence of Pope Alexander to the emperor Frederick—Thomas a Becket.

DARKNESS continued in the twelfth century, yet not without some gleams of celestial light. Historians of the most undoubted credit declare that the Popes, and the other dignified priests of the Romish communion, continued to be examples of every kind of wickedness; as, by their ambition and artful policy, they were increasing in wealth and power. Every new order of monks soon became degenerate equally with the former, and the purity of scriptural religion was almost destroyed.

Attempts were made to extend the name of Christ, but they were far from being of a Christian character.

An extraordinary revolution in Tartary, at the beginning of this century, gave singular advantage to the Christian name. Koiremchan or Keuchan, the most powerful Asiatic monarch, died; and John, an ambitious Nestorian priest, seized the empire. His victorious arms having gained him the throne, he assumed the name of Unchan; but his exploits are celebrated under the name of "Prester John," he having been a

Christian presbyter. The profession of Christianity flourished under his auspices. He was succeeded in the government by his son David; but he was deprived of both his dominions and his life, by the famous, warlike Genghiz Khan, emperor of the Tartars; the people afterwards sunk into idolatry, or the delusions of Mohammedanism.

Pagan darkness still prevailed in the northern nations of Europe, notwithstanding the missionary labours of former years; and attempts were made to convert them. Boleslaus, duke of Poland, having conquered the Pomeranians, granted them peace on condition of their embracing Christianity; and sent Otho, bishop of Bamberg, to instruct them in its doctrines.

Waldemar I. of Denmark drew his sword against the Selavonians, Vendi, and Vandals, to compel their submission to the Christian ordinances; and having taken the island of Rugen, he forced its savage inhabitants, mostly pirates, to listen to the instructions of the priests who accompanied him. Absalom, archbishop of Lunden, was appointed to carry on the work of conversion to perfection.

The fierce Finlanders were reduced, after many bloody battles, by Eric IX., king of Sweden, who compelled them to receive the profession of Christ. Henry, archbishop of Upsal, was left by the victorious prince to promote the work of evangelization. His severity irritated the people, and led to his assassination. He was canonized by the Pope; and he is now called "the Apostle of the Finlanders."

Mainard, Berthold, and Albert, successively, with large bodies of soldiers, raised by commission of the Popes, forced the Livonians to be baptized, and to profess themselves Christians, while their lands and possessions were seized by these military apostles.

Henry, surnamed "the Lion," duke of Saxony, distinguished himself in this missionary work, among the Selavonians. Vicelinus appears to have been a man of learning and of a Christian spirit; and being made bishop of Oldenburg, he spent thirty years, enduring various trials, teaching the people the doctrines of Christ.

Amid the universal mass of ignorance, superstition, and

corruption, which both the Roman and Greek churches exhibited, the church of Christ began to revive in several places, during this age. Many were evidently walking with God, though in comparative obscurity, and rejoicing in the divine consolations of the gospel.

The accounts which we have of those who seem to have been really zealous for the pure gospel of Christ, are very imperfect, and in many instances merely slanders. For the most part, they were written by enemies, who regarded them as guilty of wicked heresy, they daring to search the Scriptures ; and being Dissenters from the popish communion, they were persecuted with the bitterest cruelty, even to death. The greatest revivals of vital godliness appear to have been in the southern parts of France, and the contiguous districts of Germany ; the north of Italy ; in Savoy, and in Piedmont.

These Dissenters were distinguished by the names of their most eminent teachers, or by various contemptuous appellations, taken from their peculiar customs or principles. Cathari, or Puritans, was a common term given to them in the western parts. Some were called Albigenses, from a council held at Albi, in which they were condemned ; and Petrobrusians, from Peter of Bruys, who, after twenty years' labour for the truth, was honoured as a martyr for the cause of Christ.

Among these Dissenters many churches were formed, with devout pastors of their own choosing. The Cathari in Piedmont, especially, formed separate societies, which were screened in a great measure from the domination of the popish prelates, by the retired seclusion of their habitations in the valleys, from which they were called Valdenses.

These people were exceedingly numerous ; as in this century they attracted the notice of the papal court. Egbert, an abbot of Germany, says, "They are increased to great multitudes throughout all countries. In Germany we call them Cathari ; in Flanders they call them Pipples ; in France 'Tisserands,' (weavers,) because many of them are of that occupation."

It will be natural to desire some information concerning the religious opinions of this people ; in relation to which it may be remarked, they were not perfectly unanimous on all points of either doctrine or discipline ; and some of them, it is believed,

disallowed infant baptism as useless. Egbert, already mentioned, who says he had disputed with the heretics, informs us, “They are armed with all those passages of holy Scripture which in any degree seem to favour their views: with these they know how to defend themselves, and to oppose the Catholic truth, though they mistake entirely the true sense of Scripture, which cannot be discovered without great judgment.” It appears from their embracing the Scriptures as the only rule of faith, from their confessions of faith, from their catechisms, and their celebrated *Noble Lesson*, that they were agreed in the essential doctrines of Christianity, as held by our venerable reformers, Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, and Knox.

“The *Noble Lesson*, a poem, in the language of the Troubadours,” says Mr. Vaughan, “is a depository of opinions, and an expression of feeling, not unworthy of the professors of the gospel in the most favoured period of its history.”* This poem was commonly learnt by the people, though a long one, and sung at their labours or on travel.

The moral character of these people also corresponded with their principles. Notwithstanding the slanders of their enemies, even they bear ample testimony to the purity of their habits. St. Bernard, who was himself a violent persecutor of them, says, “If you ask them of their faith, nothing can be more Christian; if you observe their conversation, nothing can be more blameless; and what they speak they prove by deeds.” Such being their general character, it may be well wondered why they should be persecuted as unworthy members of society. They were objects of ecclesiastical vengeance, because they were Dissenters, casting off the unscriptural yoke of the Pope and his prelates. They were separatists from the popish communion, which they saw to be apostate from the gospel of Christ, and corrupt in practice; and because they would admit the Holy Scriptures only as the rule of their belief and conversation.

History records a series of the most dreadful persecutions which these Puritans endured for several centuries. For their *dissent* only from human impositions, some were condemned

* Life of Wyckliffe, Vol. I., p. 131.

by the clergy at Cologne, in Germany, and burnt as heretics, in this century. Many of the persecuted Germans fled for safety to other countries ; and some sought shelter in England. Thirty of them, with Gerard their teacher, about the middle of this century, were condemned as heretics, by an ecclesiastical council at Oxford. By the instigation of the clergy, king Henry II. ordered these professors of the doctrine of the Scriptures, to be branded on the forehead with a red hot iron ; to be whipped through the streets of Oxford, and, having their clothes cut short at their girdles, to be turned into the open country. None being allowed to afford them any shelter, they perished with cold and hunger. We may hope that they nevertheless enjoyed the comforts of the Holy Spirit, as they appeared to suffer for the sake of Christ, their blessed Master.

The most celebrated leader among these Dissenters was Peter Waldo. He was a man of liberal education, a rich merchant of Lyons, in France. After his remarkable conversion, he became zealous for the promulgation of the gospel, that he might be the means of his fellow-creatures enjoying the blessings of salvation by Jesus Christ. He diligently studied the Scriptures ; and he made or procured a translation of the New Testament into French, about A. D. 1160. This was the first translation of the Word of God into a modern language, and it became an unspeakable blessing to the reviving church of Christ. He distributed his wealth, in various ways, among the poor ; and, devoting himself to the work of the ministry, and the circulation of the Scriptures and other religious books, numerous churches were established by his labours.

But this daring reformer was not allowed to proceed in his evangelical work in peace. Pope Alexander III. heard of his proceedings, and anathematized him and all his adherents. He also commanded the archbishop of Lyons to proceed against him with the utmost rigour. Waldo escaped from Lyons, and carried the Word of Life into several provinces on the Continent. By the special care of Providence, however, he was preserved for twenty years, during which time a great part of Europe was, at least partially, enlightened by his means. Waldo died about A. D. 1179.

It has been questioned whether the disciples of Waldo were reckoned among the Cathari or Waldenses. From the time of Waldo, it seems that the Cathari were included in the general denomination Waldenses; and they maintained a Christian intercourse with the Waldenses of Piedmont, among whom they frequently found an asylum from their persecutors.

The churches of these Waldenses or Valdenses had no perfect uniformity of ceremonies, but differed from each other on several minor points; yet they agreed in the maintenance of the grand essentials of Christianity. Their churches being independent of each other, having no head but Jesus Christ, and his Word their only acknowledged rule, none claimed supreme dominion over the other. They were not inimical or opposing sects, but one fellowship, united by the common bonds of evangelical charity.

The fanatic crusades were still carried on in this century. Jerusalem had been taken, with several other strong places, in the last year of the eleventh century, by the united forces of the Christians; and their cause appeared in a flourishing condition: but their affairs declining through their own animosities, and the vigilant power of the warlike Turks, a second crusade was undertaken in the middle of this century, and a third at its close. By these expeditions it has been computed, not less than *three millions of Europeans* were actually sacrificed to the frenzy of superstition, and the ambition of the Popes.

The most distinguished minister of the Romish communion, in the twelfth century, was Saint Bernard, abbot of Clairval. His reputation for wisdom and sanctity became so great, that no man in all Europe possessed so much influence as he; and both sovereigns and prelates sought his decisions as oracles. It appears, however, somewhat difficult to determine his real character; for though some of his writings are truly evangelical and judicious, breathing the spirit of a Christian taught of God, he was a bitter persecutor of the Waldenses, whose excellent character himself testifies; he was a devoted supporter of the usurped claims of the Pope; zealous for many of the gross superstitions of the age, and even an advocate for the lying miracles and pious frauds. Bernard died A. D. 1153.

Peter Lombard may claim some notice here, as by his means the church received a serious diversion from the Word of God, and probably incalculable injury. He prepared a body of divinity, consisting of passages selected from the Latin Fathers, which he ranged in four books: from this production he was called "Master of the Sentences." Though full of absurdities, trifles, and endless contradictions, it became the common standard of theology, occasioning the still further neglect of the Scriptures. The testimony of the celebrated Roger Bacon, an Englishman of the next century, shows the veneration in which this system was held, in preference to the writings of the apostles and prophets. He says, "The bachelor who reads the Scriptures gives place to the reader of the *Sentences*, who everywhere and among all is honoured and preferred. He who reads the Lombardine thesis, may anywhere dispute and be esteemed a *master*; he who reads the text of Scripture is admitted to no such honour."

As worthy of being noted in this century, may be recorded the origin of the university of Cambridge. "Gislebert, with three other monks, was sent by the abbot of Croyland, A. D. 1109, to his manor of Cottenham, near Cambridge. These monks went every day to Cambridge, where they hired a barn as a convenient place for public lectures. One read grammar in the morning, a second read logic at one o'clock, and a third, at three in the afternoon, gave lectures on rhetoric, from Tully and Quintilian. Gislebert himself preached on Sundays and other holidays. The barn was soon found insufficient to contain the auditors; and therefore accommodations were provided for the labours of these men in different parts of the town. Such is the account which Peter of Blois gives of the infant state of learning in the university of Cambridge."^{*}

We may also add a record of the shocking insolence of Pope Alexander III., haughtily treading upon the neck of the emperor Frederick I., while kissing the foot of his Holiness, the Pope repeating the words of the Psalmist, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt

* Milner, Vol. II., p. 420.

thou trample under feet." (Psalm. xci. 13.) In this century, also, was murdered the imperious and turbulent Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, who was canonized by the Pope as a saint of the church of Rome.

CHAPTER XII.

CENTURY XIII.

Extension of Christianity by various missions—True church struggling with difficulties—Dissenters greatly increase—Their principles and character—Court of inquisition—Crusade against Dissenters—One hundred and fourteen burnt in Paris—Count of Thoulouse—Papal edict against them—Dominicans and Franciscans—Eminent men—John Scot—Robert Greathead—Louis IX., king of France—Roger Bacon—Interdict upon England by Pope Innocent III.—Humiliation of John before Randolph papal legate.

ECCLESIASTICAL historians record several attempts which were made in this century to extend at least the forms of Christianity, as they were commonly observed by the Romish and eastern churches. But, alas! these missionaries and their labours, appear to have manifested very little of that holy and benevolent spirit of the apostles of Christ; and their converts were, of course, generally, it is to be feared, grossly ignorant of the truth as it is in Jesus, and the pure gospel of his salvation.

The Nestorians continued to have many churches in Tartary, India, Persia, and China. Genghis Khan was succeeded by many warlike emperors of the Moguls and Tartars, who reduced China under their dominion; and many of their princes embraced the profession of Christianity. It is said that Haiton, king of Armenia, sent his brother Mango to one of the emperors, who was prevailed upon to embrace the doctrines of Christ, and with a great army to oppose the ferocious Saracens. Mongu, Khan of Tartary, married the daughter of Haiton; and being converted by her means, he, with his whole family, and his brother Alan, were baptized in the name of Christ. Alan was then sent with an army to assist in the recovery of Jerusalem, having the figure of Christ crucified on his standard.

Some Tartars carried their victorious arms into Europe, and ravaged Hungary, Poland, Silesia, and the adjacent countries. To conciliate them, Popes Innocent IV. and Nicholas IV., therefore, sent embassies of Franciscans and Dominicans to the emperors. Among those missionaries was John of Corvin, who translated the New Testament and the Psalms into the language of the Tartars. By this means many of the Nestorians adopted the discipline of the Roman communion, and built churches in different parts of Tartary and China. The Franciscans and Dominicans imposing upon their converts, and the Mohammedan doctrines being more congenial to their martial habits, the greater part of them renounced the monkish superstitions, and embraced the delusion of the false prophet.

Some feeble efforts were made by the Danes in this century to extend the profession of Christianity.

In Spain also, the kings of Castile, Leon, Navarre, and Arragon, having overcome their Saracen invaders, laboured to bring them to a profession of the gospel. Alphonsus IX., king of Leon, and his son Ferdinand, are honoured for their attempts; but especially James I. of Arragon, who, to prevent losing his Arab subjects, founded public schools at Majorca and Barcelona, to qualify men to preach the gospel in their own language. These efforts being ineffectual, Pope Clement IV. exhorted the king to drive them out of the kingdom. The order of the pontiff was obeyed, and much bloodshed was the consequence.

Conrad, duke of Massora, engaged the Teutonic knights, who had been driven out of Palestine, and who had settled at Venice, to attempt the conversion of those Prussians who yet remained pagans. Under the command of Herman of Saltza, these booted apostles compelled the people to acknowledge the faith of Christ. Having fixed their dominion in Prussia, they extended "their conquests into Lithuania, where they pillaged, burned, massacred, and ruined all before them," until the wretched inhabitants yielded to the dictates of those furious missionaries, and professed to believe the gospel!

The true church of Christ, in the thirteenth century, is beheld struggling in deep affliction; and its ministers, like the apocalyptic witnesses, prophesying, clothed in sackcloth. Vital

religion appears to have found its friends, principally among the despised Waldenses, Albigenses, and Beghards. They received the latter name in Germany from their habits of fervency in prayer, which the word in the language of that country signifies. Under several denominations these dissenters and separatists from the Romish church continued marvellously to increase in France, Spain, Germany, and even in Italy; being protected, in several places, by persons of high distinction.

It would be too much to affirm the purity of their doctrines in every particular; but as many of them made the Scriptures their only rule of belief and practice, they preserved the soundness of their faith in a remarkable degree. As to their practice, they justified themselves against the accusations of their enemies; some of whom slanderously charged them with the grossest immorality. Such, however, was the case with the primitive Christians; and it was the lot of even our blessed Lord himself, and it has been the same with true disciples in all ages, for his name's sake.

The principles and general character of the Waldenses, are brought before us in an interesting and satisfactory manner. We have extant some of their own "Apologies," and "Confessions of Faith," which are truly excellent. Besides, Reinierius Saccho, who had been brought up among them, and was therefore acquainted with their principles and character, was appointed legate and inquisitor, for the purpose of extirpating them. Though an apostate from them, and their determined enemy, he testifies as follows: "Of all the sects that have risen up against the church of Rome, the Waldenses have been the most prejudicial and pernicious. They live righteously before men, believe rightly concerning God in every particular, holding all the articles contained in the creed, (apostles' creed,) but hating and reviling the church of Rome, and on this subject they are readily believed by the people." We cannot but believe that such a people, concerning whom an enemy would so write, were living by faith on the Son of God, and enjoying the comforts of the Holy Ghost. It was even their boast that there was scarcely a man or woman among them, who was not better read in the Bible than the doctors of the church.

However sound and evangelical their principles, and pure and exemplary their morals, they could not escape persecution. They were harassed in the most cruel and systematic manner by a powerful court, with numerous officers, established for that purpose. That establishment was “the Court of the Holy Inquisition,” as it is called by the papists: but it is generally admitted, that no institution of so diabolical a character had ever existed in any age or nation. It is supposed, that at first its officers were authorized only to make inquisition for heresies, and to labour for their conversion to popery; but in a few years, under the sanction of the Pope, the inquisition exercised unlimited power, and in the most inhuman manner. By methods which required more than depraved human ingenuity to devise, they proceeded in their bloody work, and the beginning of this century was distinguished by thousands of the Waldenses being put to death, by hanging, burning, and various other dreadful tortures. Under the denomination of Waldenses and Albigenses, in France alone, it was computed that, by the direction of the papal legates and inquisitors, not less than *a million were murdered*, in several barbarous crusades! while their only crime was, that of being dissenters from the popish domination and superstitions, separating to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to live as his obedient disciples!

It may be wondered, that the kings of France should suffer such enormities to be committed upon their worthy and loyal subjects by the commands of the Romish bishops; but it should be remembered, that the European sovereigns in that age were greatly checked by the military power of the feudal nobility, by which every province was ruled, almost independently of the monarchs. Many of the bishops and abbots also were martial nobles; and they formed alliances, as superstition or interest influenced them, to execute the decrees of the Pope. The princes under whom these dissenters lived, afforded them protection on account of their good order and industry: but, as if for a domestic crusade, armies were raised to exterminate these heretics; and several of the nobles fell with their people, being treated with every species of perfidy, injustice, and brutality, by their bigoted invaders. As these crusading armies were marching, a turbulent inquisitorial monk was

murdered in the dominions of Raymond, count of Thoulouse ; and this served as a pretext for Pope Innocent III. to publish an edict, a part of which is as follows :—“ We, moreover, promise to all those who shall take up arms to revenge the said murder, the pardon and remission of all their sins. And since we are not to keep faith with those who do not keep it with God, we would have all to understand, that every person who is bound to the said earl Raymond by oath of allegiance, or by any other way, is absolved by apostolical authority from such obligations ; and it is lawful for any Roman Catholic to persecute the said earl, and to seize upon his country. We exhort you, that you would endeavour to destroy the wicked heresy of the Albigenses ; and do this with more rigour than you would towards the Saracens themselves : persecute them with a strong hand ; deprive them of their lands and possessions ; banish them, and put Roman Catholics in their room.” Such were the shocking sentiments and language of one who called himself the chief minister and vicar of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace !

The orders of the Pope were executed without delay ; and in such a manner, that a detail of the accompanying acts of hypocrisy and treachery, of indecency and savageness, would harrow up the sensibilities of the most unfeeling soul. Hundreds at a time were butchered in the most terrible manner. Noblemen and governors, who attempted to defend the innocent inhabitants of the Waldensian cities, were anathematized, and the people indiscriminately massacred ! Writers of the greatest veracity declare, that “ the armies employed by Pope Innocent III. destroyed above two hundred thousand of them, in the short space of a few months.”

For a particular account of the Court of Inquisition, our readers must be referred to the several published histories of that dreadful tribunal.

Repeated efforts towards a reformation, in the Romish church, were made during this century ; but not by bringing the hierarchy and its doctrines to be examined by the Holy Scriptures. Many new sects arose, from the numerous tribes of shameless monks : but these were little purified from their corrupt superstitions. The new orders were chiefly the Domi-

nicans and Franciscans, so named from their founders. Though differing from each other in religious opinions, they became the chief supporters of the papal usurpation.

The eminent men in this century who were distinguished by their piety or Christian labours, were but few; but John Scot, a bishop in Scotland, Louis IX., king of France, and Robert Greathead, bishop of Lincoln, deserve special notice.

John Scot is but little known; but what is related of him displays a generous and pious concern for the salvation of his people. He was appointed bishop of Dunkeld, and his diocese included the county of Argyle, in which only the Irish language was spoken. Scot was ignorant of that tongue, but it was familiar to his chaplain Evaldus, for whom he applied to the Pope, that he might be constituted bishop of Argyle as a separate diocese. It was granted in compliance with the reasoning of Scot, who said, "How can I give a comfortable account to the Judge of the world, at the last day, if I pretend to teach those who cannot understand me? The revenues suffice for two bishops, if we are content with a competency, and are not prodigal of the Christian patrimony." Scot died A. D. 1202.

Robert Greathead, or Grosseteste, was endowed with uncommon talents, which appear to have been sanctified by the grace of God. He acquired all the learning which Europe could furnish, and his attainments and piety were universally acknowledged. On being appointed bishop of Lincoln, he reformed many abuses, especially among the monks and clergy, and promoted evangelical preaching among the people. His pious zeal urged him to oppose the Pope in appointing foreigners to church benefices, and in making such exorbitant exactions from England. It is said, that "the sums remitted to beneficed foreigners amounted, in the year 1252, to seventy thousand marks: while the king's revenue hardly rose to twenty thousand." Greathead died A. D. 1253, leaving behind him such a character, that a popish historian of that age speaks of him in the following terms: "The holy bishop Robert departed this world, which he never loved, and which was always to him as a place of banishment. He was the open reprobation of my lord, the Pope, and of the king, and the

censurer of the prelates; the corrector of the monks, the director of priests, the instructor of the clergy, the supporter of scholars, the preacher to the laity, the punisher of incontinence, the diligent investigator of various writings, and lastly, he was the scourge of lazy and selfish Romans, whom he heartily despised. In the supply of the temporal table, liberal, copious, polite, cheerful, and affable. In the spiritual table, devout, humble, and contrite. In the episcopal office, diligent, venerable, and indefatigable."

Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, was one of the most learned men of his time, and he is said to have divided the Bible into chapters. He died A. D. 1228.

Hugo, a preaching friar of the Dominican order, was the first who made a Concordance to the Scriptures. He is said to have employed five hundred monks in this work. He died A. D. 1262.

Lewis IX., king of France, was called Saint Lewis, on account of his talents, virtue, and piety. He was, nevertheless, unhappily misled by the superstitions of the age, and seriously injured his kingdom by his uniting with the agents of the Pope in persecuting heretics, and by his crusading expeditions; in the last of which he died, A. D. 1270. His pious mother Blanche took care of his education; and as he grew up, he devoted a portion of his time to religious exercises, and sought the conversation of pious men. In reply to some objections, which had been made to his devotions, he said, "If that time were spent in hunting and gaming, I should not be so rigorously called to account for the employment of my vacant hours." It is said, he gave his son Philip salutary advice, for his conduct as a sovereign, and as a Christian; and, having prayed for the conversion of infidels and sinners, he breathed out his soul, after uttering these words: "Lord, I will enter into thine house: I will worship in thy holy temple, and give glory to thy name. Into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Lewis died on a crusade; the Holy War, therefore, was not yet ended. The crusading interest in the Holy Land, however, continued to decline: nevertheless, excited by the Popes, several princes undertook successive expeditions, till the close

of the thirteenth century; when most of the provinces in the East, which had been gained by the Christians, became the permanent possession of the Mohammedan conquerors.

The other events of this century, worthy of notice here, are, first, the many years' imprisonment of Roger Bacon, the friar, on account of his extraordinary attainments in the learned languages, his various discoveries, and the progress he had made in natural philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, and the mechanic arts; which were attributed to his commerce with the devil.

Secondly, the dreadful condition of England, through the interdict of Pope Innocent III.; with the humiliation of king John before Randolph, the Pope's legate, at Dover.

For the particulars of the interdict, and the consternation it produced, our readers must refer to the general history of England. Yet it may be observed, that the Pope was offended by king John refusing to consent to the appointment of Langton to be archbishop of Canterbury: on which Innocent excommunicated him, absolved his subjects from their allegiance to him, and declared his throne vacant. The celebration of divine service was suspended, and the administration of the sacraments, except baptism. The church doors were closed; the statues of the saints were laid on the ground; and the offices of Christian burial were refused to the dead. Filled with superstitious horror, John brought himself under a solemn oath to perform whatever the Pope should impose. He prostrated himself at the feet of the legate of his Holiness; delivering up his crown and sceptre, which the haughty Randolph retained five days; and then returned them to the abject monarch, as favours granted by the bishop of Rome. Before receiving his ensigns of royalty, he was required to take an oath, of which the following is a copy: "I, John, by the grace of God, king of England, and lord of Ireland, in order to expiate my sins, from my own free will, and the advice of my barons, give to the church of Rome, to Pope Innocent and his successors, the kingdom of England, and all other prerogatives of my crown. I will hereafter hold them as the Pope's vassal. I will be faithful to God, to the church of Rome, to the Pope, my master, and his successors legitimately elected.

I promise to pay him a thousand marks yearly; to wit, seven hundred for the kingdom of England, and three hundred for the kingdom of Ireland." King John took the oath, with all possible solemnity, upon his knees, with his hands held up between those of the legate, Randolph!

CHAPTER XIII.

CENTURY XIV.

Attempts to extend Christianity—Churches in China, Tartary, and India, ruined by Tamerlane—Romish church—Wickedness of the Popes—Indulgencies—Monks—Mendicants—Franciscans—Waldenses—Echard, the Inquisitor, converted—Increase of the Dissenters—Lollards—Bradwardine—Wyckliffe—His translation of the New Testament—Schism of the popedom—Three different Popes.

THE recovery of Palestine from the Saracens was still an object of desire by the Roman Pontiffs. For that purpose, various efforts were made by them to induce the European princes, especially the kings of England and France, to lead new expeditions into Asia. One army only embarked, under Guy, dauphin of Vienne; but he was obliged, in a short time, to return with his troops, being unable to procure provisions.

The Romish missionaries in China succeeded, and Cambalu, the metropolis, the modern Pekin, was erected into an archbishopric, under John de Corvin, already mentioned as the translator of the New Testament. He died A. D. 1330. A new archbishop was appointed, and sent with letters from the Pope to the emperor; between whom a correspondence was carried on, and churches flourished, both Romish and Nestorian. But these fair appearances were soon blasted: for Timur Beg, or, as he is called, Tamerlane, the mighty emperor of the Tartars, embraced the doctrines of Mohammed, and became a cruel persecutor of the Christians. This formidable warrior subdued the greatest part of Asia, triumphed over Bajazet, emperor of the Turks, and, with the utmost barbarity, compelled the wretched professors of the Christian faith to apostatize. Thus the light of Christianity was almost extinguished in those parts of Asia inhabited by the Moguls,

Tartars, and Chinese. Some miserable remains of the Nestorians have been since found in China; but the last emperor of the race of Genghis Khan was expelled from that throne, A. D. 1369, and a new dynasty succeeded, by which foreigners were forbidden to enter China.

Jagello, duke of Lithuania, is believed to have been the only European prince who continued pagan in this century. Lewis, king of Poland, dying in 1382, he became a candidate for the throne; and that dignity, together with the possession of Hedwige, daughter of the deceased monarch, induced him to embrace Christianity; and at his baptism, A. D. 1386, he received the name of Wladislaus.

The Teutonic knights continued to crusade with fire and sword against the remains of paganism found in Prussia and Livonia. Against the Jews, also, cruel persecutions were raised, especially in France and Germany, through which many were induced to submit to the ordinance of baptism, and assume the name of Christians.

The real church of Christ, during the fourteenth century, maintained her contest with ignorance and intolerance, and continued to increase, though surrounded with the most inveterate and powerful enemies.

The Romish church still exhibited a dreadful mass of ignorance, and idolatrous corruption. The dignified clergy, and especially the Popes, were eminent for their unbounded ambition, and for their overbearing insolence, even to kings. Regardless of the pretended holiness of their character, they showed no respect to the obligations of morality, farther than as these furnished pretexts to subserve a wicked policy. The intolerable haughtiness of Boniface VIII. led him to insult Philip the Fair, king of France, with his letters, in which he asserted, that the king of France, with all other kings and princes whatsoever, were obliged by a divine command to submit to the authority of the Popes, as well in all political and civil matters, as in those of a religious nature. Philip replied to this arrogance in a manner expressive of his contempt: on which the Pope published a bull, in which he daringly asserted, "that Jesus Christ had subjected the whole human race to the authority of the Roman Pontiff; and that whoever dared to

disbelieve it, were to be deemed heretics, and stood excluded from all possibility of salvation."

To increase their revenues, the Popes were accustomed to sell indulgences to the deluded people; who eagerly laid out their money in such licenses, as the means of relieving their minds from guilt, and of securing eternal salvation. John XXII. was an eminent promoter of this shameful traffic; and, however strange it may appear, these indulgences could be procured from the priests, for the crimes of fornication, incest, perjury, simony, murder, patricide, and parricide, charged according to table, published under the title of "The Fees of the Apostolical Chancery."

The monks, in numerous sects, were as a destructive plague, gathering the wealth of every kingdom. The principal orders were the Mendicants, the Franciscans, and the Dominicans, and they were become the heads of the church; and every thing of importance, both in the court of Rome, and in the cabinets of princes, was carried on under their direction. They generally lived either in luxurious idleness, or in actively binding the people with the chains of superstition. Many made it an essential part of their last wills, that their carcasses, after death, should be wrapped in old, ragged Dominican or Franciscan habits, and interred among the Mendicants, as the certain method of obtaining mercy at the tribunal of Christ. The Franciscans had the audacity to equal their founder with our blessed Saviour; and to declare that their institution and discipline were the true gospel of Jesus. The fanatic Francis had impressed upon himself five marks, in imitation of the wounds of Christ, and then declared they had been made by Christ himself: and this impious absurdity was sanctioned by the Popes. After his death, Bartholomew Albizi published a book entitled, "The Conformities of St. Francis," in forty particulars. This infamous tract, in which the Son of God is put upon a level with a wretched mortal, is an eternal monument of the outrageous enthusiasm and abominable arrogance of the Franciscan order; and not less so of the excessive impudence of the Popes, in extolling and recommending it.

The Waldenses were firm in their principles of dissent and separation from the Romish communion; and they continued

to be persecuted and hunted to death with the utmost savageness of bigotry. In Germany, Echard, an inquisitor, grievously destroyed them; but he was converted from his savageness to the true faith of Christ, while prosecuting his bloody work. Being wearied in murdering these men of God, and confounded by their pious behaviour, he was induced seriously to inquire of them the true reason of their separation from the church of Rome, and also to examine their confessions of faith. Being enlightened by their evangelical instructions, on conviction, he cordially embraced their doctrines, and joined their communion. He zealously preached the faith which he before had laboured to destroy; on account of which he was pursued by popish emissaries, and suffered martyrdom for Christ at Heidelberg, in Germany.

That these people were able to maintain their ground against such determined measures for their destruction, must appear wonderful; and their preservation can be attributed only to the overruling providence of God, who employed them to accomplish his most merciful purposes. By their sleepless persecutors, they were driven into various provinces, especially Livonia, Poland, and Bohemia. In these countries, they so scattered the good seed of the gospel, and with such success, that, as we learn from credible authority, there were no less than eighty thousand of them in Bohemia at the commencement of this century.

It may be here inquired, whether all the sects of this age regarded the Scriptures as the only rule of their faith and worship. This is not pretended; as there were vast numbers of sects within the Roman church that were not dissenters from that communion, and by whom no regard was paid to the Scriptures. These were the offspring of the wide-spreading superstition, and distinguished for little besides their peculiar extravagancies, both in belief and practice.

The scriptural dissenters were distinguished by various names of reproach, occasioned by circumstances. They were denominated Lollards, from their custom of singing psalms, for the consolation of their brethren on the decease of pious friends. The Lollards became exceedingly numerous, this being the most usual appellation given to these separatists,

especially in England. Their scriptural principles were spread in this country by several powerful disputants, and by eloquent itinerant preachers. These were admired and followed, not only by the common people, but many of the higher ranks, being protected by several noblemen, particularly the duke of Lancaster. They were so increased, that a contemporary historian, who was their determined enemy, says, but probably with some exaggeration, "More than one half of the people of England in a few years became Lollards."

The most learned and laborious ministers in the church, during the fourteenth century, appear to have been Thomas Bradwardine and John Wyycliffe.

Bradwardine was a man of solid piety, of remarkable modesty, of unusual purity of life, and of various and extensive learning. He wrote much, and his elaborate work, "Concerning the Cause of God," justly entitled him to the appellation which had been given him,—"the Profound Doctor." He was professor of divinity in the university of Oxford; but being appointed personal chaplain to Edward III., he attended that monarch in his French wars, and often preached to the army with such meekness and persuasiveness of pious wisdom, as restrained them from many of those enormities which are usually perpetrated by a conquering soldiery. With Christian integrity he discharged his duty, in softening the fierceness of his royal master's temper, when carrying the terror of his arms into the neighbouring kingdom. The archbishopric of Canterbury being vacant, Bradwardine was consecrated to that dignity a few weeks only before his death: but he enjoyed that honour in England but a few days. Bradwardine died A. D. 1349.

John Wyycliffe is deservedly called "the Father of the Reformation;" not only because, by his numerous writings, he fearlessly and successfully exposed the wicked and unchristian pretensions of the Popes and prelates, and the extreme corruption of the Romish church; but especially as he first rendered the Scriptures into the English tongue. Wyycliffe was a prodigy of learning in that dark age. He was professor of divinity at Oxford, whose university he defended against the insolent pretensions of the mendicant friars. He boldly

remonstrated with the Pope, on account of his exorbitant exactions, which, upon various pretences, it is said, amounted to a great deal more than was paid by the nation in taxes to the king. Wyckliffe rendered to the church the greatest service which was possible, in the order of instrumentality. Besides restoring the true doctrine of a sinner's justification by faith in the atonement and righteousness of Christ, he translated the whole Bible into English; by the circulation of which, especially the New Testament, the Word of God was spread open to the people, and a permanent foundation was laid for the future destruction of the Romish idolatry, superstition, and tyranny, by the diffusion of the pure doctrine of the gospel of Christ.

Every possible effort was made, both by the Popes and the prelates, not only to silence Wyckliffe, but to destroy him: but he was protected by the powerful duke of Lancaster, son of the aged king. He spent the latter years of his life in the discharge of his pastoral duties, as rector of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he died in peace, A. D. 1387.

The principles of this reformer were too sacred to perish at the death of their advocate; though, by his zealous opposition to popery and prelacy, he created many enemies, who laboured to extirpate his doctrine, and blast his memory. His doctrines were condemned in a popish council at Constance; and, by order of Pope Martin V., his books were burnt: his bones, also, were dug up and burnt to ashes by the same order, under the direction of Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, A. D. 1438. These proceedings were insufficient to extinguish the divine light which his ministry had kindled. His numerous writings rendered him famous; and they were sought, copied, and circulated all over Europe; recommended, not a little, by a public testimony borne by the doctors of the university of Oxford, to the character of that great man. They declared, "that all his conduct through life was sincere and commendable; that his conversation, from his youth upward to the time of his death, was so praiseworthy and honest, that never at any time was there a particle of suspicion raised against him; and that he vanquished, by the force of the Scriptures, all such as slandered Christ's religion." A learned author observes of this great

man, “ God gave Dr. Wyckliffe grace to see the truth of his gospel, and by seeing it to loathe all superstition and popery. By Abelard and others, he was grounded in the right faith of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper : by Bradwardine, in the nature of a true soul-justifying faith, against merit-mongers and pardoners, Pelagians and papists. Finally, by reading Grosseteste’s works, in whom he seemed to be most conversant, he described the Pope to be antichrist.”

Besides the furious quarrels among the leaders of the Franciscan, Dominican, and Mendicant orders of the monks, the most remarkable event of this age, connected with the Christian name, is the great schism in the popedom. For the space of fifty years, the Romish church had two, and sometimes three, pontifical heads at the same time ; each of the contending parties with princes and monarchs for its support, and thundering forth his dreadful spiritual anathemas against his competitors. Princes, and the people in general, were seized with a profound astonishment, and with distress, while witnessing such fearful occurrences ; not knowing whom to regard as the true guide to salvation, and the infallible vicar of Christ. Europe was convulsed by these papal contests ; by which, however, happily for mankind, many began to despise their usurped authority, to reject the pontifical decisions, and to trust for the salvation of their souls only in the name of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIV.

CENTURY XV.

Christianity in the East—Constantinople taken by the Turks—Romish church—Popes—Clergy and monks grossly corrupt—Council of Constance—True church in Europe—Waldenses—Lollards—Persecution of the Waldenses—Lollards in England—Martyrs for the Scripture doctrine—Principles of the martyrs—Lord Cobham.

THE fifteenth century is truly memorable in the history of the church of God, which was evidently making rapid advances to a most momentous crisis. In the East, the wretched forms of Christianity were almost annihilated by the conquering arms

of the Turks. As the Greeks could not be induced to submit to the rites of the Roman communion, none of the western princes would afford them any assistance in repelling the Mohammedans: therefore, after taking every other place of importance, the Turks became masters of Constantinople, A. D. 1453; by which the Grecian empire was ruined. Part of this splendid metropolis surrendered on terms, and the forms of Christianity were allowed to the people, subject to severe taxation; while the other being taken by force of arms, every vestige of Christian worship was utterly destroyed.

Some small remains of the Nestorian churches still subsisted in Chaldea, Cathay, and the remoter provinces of China; but it is believed they did not survive the close of this century.

The church of Rome continued in the most deplorable state of idolatry, corruption, and oppression. The most respectable historians declare, that its various orders of ministers, from the Pope down to the meanest ecclesiastic, were addicted to the most infamous practices: that the monastic societies were as so many herds of lazy, illiterate, and licentious Epicureans. Both princes and people, while they groaned under the intolerable evils produced by such a race of abandoned religionists, were distracted between a superstitious veneration for the sacred profession of the clergy, and an abhorrence of their detestable characters. At the commencement of the century, the miseries of Europe were dreadfully augmented by three contending factions, each having a Pope at its head, pretending to be the infallible vicar of Jesus Christ! A particular detail of the papal disputes, the depositions, new elections, resignations, and crimes, of the numerous pontiffs, with the decisions and decrees of the councils which were called on their account during the first half of this century, would fill many volumes. It may, however, be observed, that Pope John XXIII. was at length prevailed with by the emperor Sigismund to summon a general council, for the purpose of settling the ecclesiastical government, and of removing the grievances which afflicted the empire. The council met at Constance, A. D. 1414, composed of the emperor, most of the German princes, the Pope, with his cardinals, and a multitude of bishops and doctors, and ambassadors from all the European states. Among the first

acts of this assembly it was decreed that the Roman Pontiff was subject to a general council, and therefore they proceeded to depose John XXIII. on account of his shocking crimes. Gregory XII. sent in his resignation, to prevent deposition; and Benedict XIII., refusing submission to the decisions of the council which deposed him, produced many distractions till his death, A. D. 1423. The council elected Otto, of Colonna, to the papal chair, which he ascended A. D. 1416, under the name of Martin V.

Amid all this political distraction, the true church of Jesus Christ was progressively advancing in strength and courage. The persecutions of the last century had scattered the seeds of evangelical doctrine into almost every province of Europe. But the genuine disciples of Christ appear to have been most numerous among the Waldenses in the south of France, the valleys of Piedmont, Germany, and Bohemia; and in England, among the Lollards or Gospellers, who were followers of the doctrine of Wyckliffe.

The rulers of the Romish church continued to persecute these dissenters. Their murderous warfare was renewed with the opening of the century in vigorous endeavours to exterminate even the recollection of the Waldensian name. The valley of Pragela was deluged with the blood of these disciples of Christ. Albert, archdeacon of Cremona, in Italy, received the sacred commission from Pope Innocent VIII., A. D. 1488, to put to death all of them in the valleys of Piedmont. Incredible numbers fell victims to his merciless bigotry, which was rendered invincible by an army of eighteen thousand soldiers. Many, escaping the sword and fire, sought refuge among the Alpine snows; where women and children, and mothers with their sucking infants, perished by hundreds through cold and hunger. The mouths of caves, to which some had retired, were stopped with faggots, which being set on fire, those within were suffocated. On searching, about three thousand persons were found in this manner stifled to death! But the various scenes of complicated misery, which these harmless confessors of the gospel were called to endure in this persecution, are too shocking to admit of particular description! In several valleys the Waldensian churches were totally destroyed, and

every soul of these dissenters was cut off: but, like the Hebrews in Egypt, the more they were oppressed, the more they appeared to increase in different provinces. The Lollards in England were countenanced by the Duke of Lancaster, and by Anne, the pious queen of Richard II. It is said, this lady possessed the four Gospels in English, with commentaries upon them. Their support contributed in a great degree to their increase: yet this body of dissenters was not suffered to enjoy a long repose. Their attachment to the Saviour and his gospel excited the bitterest enmity of the papists. Arundel and Chichesly, successively archbishops of Canterbury, were zealous in employing their resources to destroy the religion of the Scriptures. The former of these was evidently a man of no principle; and of the latter Mr. Milner says, “This man deserves to be called the firebrand of the age in which he lived.”

William Sawtree, a Spanish priest in London, was arrested, condemned as a heretic, and cruelly burnt to death, for preaching the faith of Christ, A. D. 1400. He was the first of the noble army of martyrs in England, who were brought to the stake for opposing, by the Scriptures, the abominations of popery. This country, however, was distinguished, in this century, by a long succession of such witnesses for Jesus Christ; one of whom was a nobleman of pre-eminent talents and virtues. The names of a few of these pious confessors shall be recorded.

John Badby, a tailor, was condemned and burnt as a heretic, A. D. 1409. He declared to Arundel, respecting the bread in the Lord’s Supper, that it still remained bread after consecration. “I believe,” said he, “the omnipotent God in Trinity to be one. But if every consecrated host be the Lord’s body, then there are twenty thousand gods in England.” While Badby was in the fire, king Henry offered him a pension, on condition of his recanting: but divine grace enabled him to reject the offer. A. D. 1414, an assembly of the Lollards was surprised at St. Giles’s Fields, since become a part of London: about twenty were killed, and sixty taken prisoners. Beverly, their preacher, was put to death, and two more of them, John Brown and Sir Roger Acton. A. D. 1415, John Claydon, a currier, after much vexation, was burnt in Smithfield. A. D.

1422, William Taylor, a priest, suffered at the same place. A. D. 1424, William White, a zealous preacher, was burnt at Norwich. A. D. 1430, Richard Hoveden, a wool-spinner, sealed the doctrine of Christ at the stake, near the Tower. At the same place, and in the same manner, Thomas Bagley, vicar of Monenden, suffered, A. D. 1431. John Goose, was burnt for the faith, on Tower-hill, A. D. 1473. A venerable matron of eighty years old, named Joan Boughton, was burnt, A. D. 1494, in Smithfield. She triumphed in the flames, commanding her spirit to God, her Saviour.

These courageous professors of the gospel were usually charged with holding the heresy of Wyckliffe: but they justified their principles by appealing to the Word of God. Reading the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue was called, by way of reproach, "Wyckliffe's learning." The name of this great man was held in such abhorrence by the ruling clergy, that many decrees were made and published by the archbishops for the extirpation of Wyckliffe's doctrine. Among other iniquitous things, it was enacted, "that whosoever they were that should read the Scriptures in the mother tongue, they should forfeit land, cattle, life, and goods, from their heirs for ever, and so be condemned for heretics to God, enemies to the crown, and most arrant traitors to the land!"

The English nobleman that suffered martyrdom in this century was Sir John Oldeastle, lord of Cobham. He was a known patron of Lollardism, by his circulating Wyckliffe's writings, and by his supporting some university preachers to disseminate among the common people the pure gospel of salvation. The superstitious mind of Henry V. was soon prejudiced against his faithful servant, and alienated from him, by the malicious insinuations of archbishop Arundel. The king sent for him, and commanded him to confess his errors, to abandon his heresy, and be obedient to the Romish church. The noble champion for Christ replied, " You, most worthy prince, I am always prompt and willing to obey, forasmuch as I know you a Christian king, and the appointed minister of God, bearing the sword to the punishment of evil-doers, and for a safeguard of them that be virtuous. Unto you, next my eternal God, owe I my whole obedience, and submit there-

unto, as I have ever done, all that I have, either of fortune or nature ; ready, at all times, to fulfil whatever you shall in the Lord command me. But, as touching the Pope and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service ; forasmuch as I know them, by the Scriptures, to be the great antichrist, ‘the son of perdition,’ the open adversary of God, and ‘the abomination standing in the holy place.’” The king dismissed him ; but, though a peer of the realm, he was persecuted by the prelates, and condemned as a heretic. Archbishop Arundal offered him absolution in the court, if he would meekly desire it, returning to the church. “ Nay, forsooth, will I not,” said Cobham ; “ for I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I will not do it.” Then, kneeling down on the pavement, and lifting up his hands to heaven, he said, “ I confess here unto thee, my eternal, living God, that in my youth I offended thee, O Lord, most grievously, in pride, wrath, and gluttony, in covetousness, and in uncleanness. Many men have I hurt in mine anger, and done many horrible sins. Good Lord, I ask thee mercy !” Then, with tears, he addressed the people, saying, “ Lo ! good people, lo ! for the breaking of God’s laws and commandments, they never yet cursed me ; but for their own laws and traditions, most cruelly do they handle me and other men. And, therefore, both they and their laws, by the promise of God, shall be utterly destroyed.” As to his faith, in reply to the archbishop, he said, “ I believe fully and faithfully in the universal laws of God. I believe that all is true which is contained in the holy, sacred scriptures of the Bible. Finally, I believe all that my Lord God would I should believe.” In reply to Dr. Walden, the prior of the Carmelites, he said, “ As for the virtuous man, Wyckliffe, whose judgment ye so highly disdain, I shall say here, of my part, both before God and man, that before I knew that despised doctrine of his, I never abstained from sin : but since I learned therein to fear my Lord God, it has been otherwise, I trust, with me : so much grace could I never find in your glorious instructions.”

The archbishop having read his condemnation, he said, with a cheerful countenance, “ Though ye judge my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet am I sure that ye can do no harm to

my soul, no more than Satan could to the soul of Job. He that created that, will of his infinite mercy save it." And, falling down on his knees, he prayed thus for his enemies : "Lord God eternal, I beseech thee of thy great mercy's sake to forgive my persecutors, if it be thy blessed will." Being a nobleman of great power, and famed in the nation for both learning and military talents, fear induced them to delay his execution, and he found means to escape from the Tower. The following year, reports were industriously circulated by his persecutors, that he was at the head of an army raised in London ; but, notwithstanding the unrelenting hatred of his enemies, and their endeavours to prove him guilty of treason, there was not discovered the least credible evidence of his conspiracy, or of his presence or connexion with an armed force. The king, however, was induced to offer a great reward for his head ; and, after four years' seclusion in Wales, through the restless malignity of the prelates, he was apprehended ; and, with all the insult of a barbarous inquisition, he was suspended alive in chains, upon a gallows, and burnt A. D. 1417, as a heretic and traitor, in St. Giles's Fields !

CHAPTER XV.

CENTURY XV—(Continued.)

John Huss—Jerome, of Prague—Hussite war—Calixtines—Church of the United Brethren—Inquisition—Discovery of America—Invention of printing—Bible printed.

THE other most famous martyrs for Christ, in this century, were John Huss, a celebrated preacher, and rector of the university of Prague, in Bohemia ; and Jerome, a learned Bohemian gentleman. They were condemned by the council of Constance, for favouring the doctrines of Wyckliffe, and maintaining that the Scriptures were the only rule of Christian faith and obedience. The inhuman imprisonment of these two holy men reflects eternal infamy upon the emperor Sigismund, who violated his imperial promise of safety to Huss, and upon

the hundreds of prelates, doctors, and princes, who composed that assembly.

It will be edifying to give some further particulars of the character and martyrdom of these noble confessors of Christ. John Huss was a person of superior powers; and he became so eminently distinguished for his learning and eloquence, as to be appointed rector of the flourishing university of Prague. Here he resided, in the highest estimation for sanctity of life, and was appointed chaplain to the queen of Bohemia. He had profited by the writings of Wyycliffe, which had found their way into that country. Abhorring the licentiousness of the monks and the clergy, he preached zealously against their false miracles, impostures, and vices; and recommended the works of our English reformer, whose sentiments he had embraced. The archbishop of Prague was incensed against him, and an accusation against him was brought before the tribunal of the Pope. He appealed against it by proctors; but they were imprisoned, and he was excommunicated. Such was the esteem in which he was held by the Bohemian nobles, that he continued his ministry, under their protection, till he was summoned to appear before the council at Constance. Huss confidently anticipated martyrdom; and, in that belief, wrote to his congregation and friends, to abide in the doctrine of Christ. He did expect to be allowed the liberty of pleading his own cause; but, on his arrival at Constance, he was thrown into prison, notwithstanding the prompt interference of his noble and generous friend, John, Count of Chlum. He was several times examined before commissioners appointed to try him, on various articles exhibited against him; to these he was required to plead guilty, and to ask pardon of his merciless enemies. With their requisition Huss would by no means comply, declaring at the same time, with tears, his readiness to retract any error, sincerely and upon oath, the moment he was convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures that it was error. Being presented before the council, in the presence of the emperor, the princes of the empire, and an immense assemblage of dignitaries, he was condemned to the stake, and his writings to be burnt. Deputations in vain attempted to prevail on him to recant; and, after enduring all the indignities

which a superstitious malice could inflict, he submitted himself to the fatal flames, in the spirit of a genuine disciple of Christ. The multitudes were astonished at his pious behaviour, and said, "What this man has done before, we know not; but we hear him now offer up most excellent prayers to God." The elector Palatine prevented him from speaking to the people, ordering him to be burnt, as he could not prevail upon him to retract. Huss, with a loud voice, cried, "Lord Jesus, I humbly suffer this cruel death for thy sake; I pray thee forgive all my enemies." He sealed the truth with his blood A. D. 1415.

Jerome was a gentleman of fortune, a man of eminent learning, which he had increased by studying at Oxford university. He was a sincere friend of Huss, whom he had encouraged in his journey to Constance; and promised, that if any danger should attend him there, he would endeavour by his presence to afford him assistance. Jerome repaired to Constance; but finding that he could render his friend no service, as his enemies had determined his destruction, and that they had also formed designs against himself, he returned to Bohemia. He was soon arrested, and led in chains to Constance, and treated in a most brutal manner for nearly a whole year. On the martyrdom of Huss, the Bohemian nobles sent a spirited remonstrance to the council against their treatment of the two worthy men, to whose learning and virtue they bore the most honourable testimony. These nobles, expressing their determination to sacrifice their lives in defence of the gospel, and of their preachers, induced the assembly to labour, both by promises and threatenings, to prevail on Jerome to recant. The horrors of a long confinement in a dungeon shook the fortitude of Jerome, and he signed a recantation which his enemies had prepared; but some of his persecutors, being dissatisfied with this measure, insisted upon his sincerity being proved by another trial. By the grace of God, Jerome recovered his former peace and self-possession, and behaved before his judges with apostolical intrepidity. He abjured his recantation, and, with extraordinary eloquence, defended the principles for which Huss suffered. "How unjust is it," said Jerome to his judges, "that ye will not hear me! Ye have confined me three hundred and forty days in several prisons, where I have been cramped with

irons, almost poisoned with filth and stench, and pinched with the want of all necessaries. During this time, ye always gave to my enemies a hearing, but refused to hear me so much as a single hour. I came to Constance to defend John Huss, because I had advised him to go thither, and had promised to come to his assistance, in case he should be oppressed. Nor am I ashamed here to make public confession of my own cowardice. I confess, and tremble while I think of it, that through fear of punishment by fire, I basely consented against my conscience to the condemnation of Wyckliffe and Huss." In vain did they propose to him to retract. "Ye have determined," said he, "to condemn me unjustly; but after my death, I shall leave a sting in your consciences, and a worm that shall never die. I appeal to the Sovereign Judge of all the earth, in whose presence ye must shortly answer me." Jerome suffered in the spirit of devout hope and triumph, as Huss had done; and even the Romish writers testify the pious behaviour of these holy men. An historian of that age, who was afterwards a Pope, says, "They went to the stake as to a banquet; not a word fell from them, which discovered the least timidity; they sang hymns in the flames to the last gasp, without ceasing." Thus was God their Saviour glorified in the sufferings and death of these holy martyrs for the gospel. Jerome was murdered at the stake A. D. 1416.

The murder of Huss and Jerome was regarded by the Bohemian nobles as an outrage upon their nation, and they meditated revenge. This passion was inflamed by the policy which was adopted towards them; as the new Pope, Martin V., showed his zeal for the church by exciting the Catholics in Moravia and Bohemia to destroy the Hussites, in obedience to the decrees of the council. Multitudes fell victims to their cruel bigotry, and perished in the mines of Kuttenburgh, by drowning, and at the stake. Many of the Hussites withdrew to a high mountain, which they fortified; and there they held their religious meetings, administering the Lord's Supper, not only in the bread, but with wine, which the council had refused to allow. Their fortification they called Tabor, from a word signifying *tent*, and from which they were called Taborites. They chose Nicholas de Hussinet and John Ziska as their

captains; under whom they defended themselves, and defeated their enemies. Through terror at being opposed in his bloody work of persecution, Wenceslas died, A. D. 1439; and the crown of Bohemia falling to Sigismund, this emperor sent a numerous army on a crusade against the Hussites. This army was joined by troops raised by the Pope for the same purpose; and many were destroyed by various torments, as schismatics and heretics. Nicholas dying A. D. 1420, Ziska became sole general, and defeated the troops of the emperor in eleven successive engagements. Ziska died A. D. 1424, and was succeeded by Procopius Rasa, under whom they still maintained their cause, until the council of Basil was called A. D. 1431, by which they were allowed the use of the cup in the Lord's Supper, and the administration of the ordinance in their own language. A separation now took place, a part being satisfied with the grant of the cup in the sacrament. These were called Calixtines, from *calix*, "a cup:" they differed but little from the Papists, who gained over their leader, Rokyzan, by appointing him archbishop of Prague, A. D. 1436; and then, being allowed the cup, they were induced to unite in persecuting their brethren. They destroyed Tabor, the city of refuge for the Taborites. These insisted not only on the use of the cup, but a general reformation of the church, and a return to the Scriptures, both in doctrine and in discipline.

Gregory, the nephew of archbishop Rokyzan, was a minister of enlightened and decided piety, and still adhered to the Taborites; through whose influence with his uncle, they obtained leave to retire to the depopulated lordship of Lititz, on the confines of Silesia and Moravia, A. D. 1453. Thither many families, nobles, and learned men, repaired from Prague and other places, and in a short time built several villages. They abandoned war, and chose several upright men for their ministers, among whom was Michael Bradazius. He, with his colleagues, under the direction of Gregory, reviewed their doctrines and church polity, and adopted an ecclesiastical system nearly approaching to the evangelical standard. Thus was formed the plan of the Moravian church, A. D. 1457; and the whole body in connexion with them they called, "the Church of the United Brethren."

The proceedings of the United Brethren were soon known to their enemies; and the increase of their congregations inflamed the bigotry of the Romish and Calixtine priests. Podiebrad was elected king of Bohemia A. D. 1458, and he united with their persecutors in harassing these dissenters. They hoped, at least, for protection from archbishop Rokyzan, but in vain: he was in alliance with their oppressors. They sent letters of consolation by messengers to their suffering brethren; and Gregory, with others, were deputed to Prague. They were seized, imprisoned, and tortured. It was reported to the archbishop, that Gregory had expired upon the rack; and Rokyzan hastened to the prison. His conscience being stung with remorse, he uttered, in lamentation over the body, "My dear Gregory, I would to God I were as thou art!" Gregory had only fainted, and was spared yet to be a nursing-father to the church; while Rokyzan continued a persecutor till A. D. 1471, and died in utter despair. In A. D. 1480, the Brethren were joined to the Waldenses who had escaped from their persecutors in Austria; Stephen, their last bishop, having been burnt alive for his profession of Christ. They were still hunted by the Catholics, and obliged to conceal themselves in thickets and caves, kindling fire only at night, when they read the Scriptures, and united in the social worship of God. They nevertheless increased, and, at the opening of the sixteenth century, no less than two hundred congregations of them were counted in Bohemia and Moravia.

The operations of the inquisition were carried on against all who were even suspected of an inclination to embrace the doctrines of Scripture, as heretics. Their proceedings, in several countries, were marked with more terrible rigour, and with additional forms of horror. Upon an extensive plan this court was established in Spain, A. D. 1481. "Torquemada, the first inquisitor-general, was appointed A. D. 1483. The total of his victims, during the eighteen years of his administration, was more than ten thousand committed to the flames; nearly seven thousand burnt in effigy; and upwards of ninety-seven thousand sentenced to confiscation, perpetual imprisonment, or infamy!"

Upon the whole, the fifteenth century was an age of extra-

ordinary events : but those other occurrences which were most interesting to us, as connected with the church of Jesus Christ, and in the chain of causes divinely appointed for its enlargement and benefit, were,—

First, the general revival of learning in Europe.

Second, the discovery of America, A. D. 1492, by Christopher Columbus.—But especially,—

Third, the invention of printing with moveable types. For the particular details of this wonderful invention, our readers may be referred to any good Encyclopædia, under the article Printing. This invaluable discovery was made at Haerlem, by Laurence Coster, A. D. 1430 ; and it was doubtless the special gift of God, for the lasting advantage of his church. Wooden types were first used ; but ingenious men continued to improve the art till the year 1450, when the first book that was printed with metal types was the Latin Bible. This work was performed by two brothers named Genfleish, at Mentz, in Germany, and may be regarded as the most important event of this century, as it spread wide open to the people the volume of Holy Scripture ; and this became the means of the most effectual preparation for that wondrous revolution in religious affairs, the Protestant Reformation.

BOOK FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

CENTURY XVI.

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTION.

Deplorable condition of the church—Offerings at the tomb of Becket—Wickedness of the Popes—Alexander VI.—Pius III.—Julius II.—Leo X.—Sale of indulgences by Tetzel.

AT the beginning of the fourteenth century, the general state of religion was such, in the nations professing Christianity, that it is impossible to find language which will give an adequate representation of its corruption. The momentous

doctrine of the gospel, justification before God by faith in the righteousness and atonement of Christ, had been discarded for ages, both by the Roman and Greek churches; and penance, with a senseless round of superstitious rites and ceremonies, was substituted in its room. The Holy Scriptures were almost totally laid aside by the clergy; some of whom, even bishops, had never read or seen them. The ignorance of the people was extreme, and their superstition the most debasing; and far more homage was paid to the relics of reputed saints than to the ever-blessed God, our Saviour. This will be strikingly illustrated by a fact of English history. A hundred thousand devotees, in one year, are registered, as having visited the altar and tomb of Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury; and while not a farthing was offered at the altar dedicated to Jesus Christ, and only four pounds one shilling and eightpence were given at the altar of the Virgin Mary; that of the arrogant priest received nine hundred and fifty-four pounds sterling! Besides the mysterious horrors of the “Holy Inquisition,” terrors on every side, and the fictitious fire of purgatory, teeming with frightful ghosts and apparitions, haunted the alarmed imaginations of the deluded people. The number of the clergy was enormous, as that order had secured to themselves an immense proportion of the wealth in every nation; their lives were most scandalous, being a correct counterpart of the manners of the prelates and Popes, by whom they were licensed, at a fixed and moderate rate, to practise every species of abomination!

This century commenced under the pontificate of Alexander VI., “whom,” as Mosheim observes, “humanity disowns, and who is rather to be considered as a monster than a man, whose deeds excite horror, and whose enormities place him among the most execrable tyrants of ancient times. The world was delivered from this papal fiend in the year 1503, by the poisonous draught which he had prepared for others, as is generally believed. He was succeeded by Pius III., who in less than a month was deprived by death of that high dignity. The vacant chair was obtained by fraud and bribery by Julian de la Rovere, who assumed the name of Julius II. To the odious list of vices with which Julius II. dishonoured the pontificate, we may add the most savage ferocity, the most auda-

cious arrogance, the most despotic vehemence of temper, and the most extravagant and frenetic passion for war and bloodshed." "His whole pontificate was one continued scene of military tumult; nor did he suffer Europe to enjoy a moment's tranquillity as long as he lived." Lewis XII., king of France, and Maximilian I., emperor of Germany, made several vigorous efforts "to set bounds to the tyranny of this furious Pontiff, and to correct and reform the errors and corruptions of a superstitious church." Julius treated their opposition with mockery and laughter; but while meditating their condemnation, and the gratification of his vindictive spirit, death put an end to his enormities, A. D. 1512.

Julius was succeeded by Leo X. in the following year. He was a patron of learning; but, it is believed, an atheistical infidel in principle, and devoted to the most abominable courses of living. His licentious extravagances were, however, mercifully overruled to serve as the occasion of leading to that most glorious revolution in Europe, the Protestant Reformation.

It may seem strange, that the licentious excesses of the Popes should contribute to the Reformation: but, to support the expenses of his corrupt pleasures, Leo employed every conceivable method of raising money; one of which was, an immense extension of the long-accustomed sale of indulgences. These were grants from the Pope of "absolution from all ecclesiastical censures, however incurred, and from all the sins, transgressions, and excesses, how enormous soever they may be;" assuring the credulous purchaser, that "when thou diest, the gates of punishment shall be shut, and the gates of the paradise of delights shall be opened." Tetzel was the commissioned public salesman in Germany. "This frontless monk executed his iniquitous commission, not only with matchless insolence, indecency, and fraud, but even carried his impiety so far as to derogate from the all-sufficient merits of Christ." In selling these blasphemous delusions, Tetzel told the purchasers, "The moment your money tinkles in the chest, your father's soul mounts up out of purgatory." This shocking traffic called forth, in different nations, the pious indignation of several holy men, whom God had been preparing, by his Word and Spirit, for the work of reformation; and they

exposed, before the people, the folly and wickedness of such a scandalous commerce; and, by their evangelical ministry, subverted the usurpations of the antichristian papacy in several nations of Europe.

SECTION II.—GERMANY.

Martin Luther—Opposes Tetzel—Papal advocates of indulgences—Luther appeals to the Pope—Defends himself before cardinal Cajetan—Escapes imprisonment—Zealously preaches the gospel—His writings condemned by the Pope's Bull—Luther burns the Bull and canon law before a vast crowd at Wittemburg.

OPPOSITION to the sale of indulgences was made by several; the most famous of whom was Martin Luther, a monk of the order of St. Augustine. This reformer was born 1483, at Isleben, a town of Upper Saxony. He was educated for the law, and commenced Master of Arts at the age of twenty: but one of his friends being struck dead by lightning, as they were walking in the fields, he formed the resolution of withdrawing from the world; and, at the age of twenty-two, he entered the monastery at Erfurt. He was the subject of unusual dejection through the consciousness of his own sinfulness, and the influence of temptation. On opening his mind to the vicar-general of the Augustine monks, Staupitius endeavoured to comfort him, saying, “ You do not know how useful and necessary this trial may be to you: God does not thus exercise you for nothing; you will one day see that he will employ you for great purposes.” In the second year of his retirement, Luther discovered in his library a neglected Latin Bible. This was a divine treasure to him in seeking spiritual consolation; and studying it with wonder and devout admiration, his prayers were answered, and evangelical comfort filled his enlightened spirit. In 1507, he was ordained to the priesthood, and called by Staupitius to the professorship of philosophy and theology in the university of Wittemberg. His preaching was serious, evangelical, and awakening; so that a certain doctor observed of him, “ This monk will confound all the doctors, will exhibit new doctrines, and reform the whole

Roman church; for he is intent on reading the writings of the prophets and apostles, and he depends on the word of Jesus Christ: this neither the philosophers nor sophists can subvert."

Luther was sent in 1510, on the business of his monastery, to Rome, where he gave great offence to the priests by his serious piety. In 1512, he was created Doctor of Divinity, and with zeal and faithfulness he expounded the epistle to the Romans and the book of Psalms, to large congregations. This procedure, restoring the doctrines of the Scriptures, rendered him suspected of heresy: but, "growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," he persevered. His experimental acquaintance with the essentials of gospel truth, may be perceived from a passage of a letter to a friend, in 1516. He says, "I desire to know what your soul is doing; whether, wearied at length of its own righteousness, it learns to refresh itself, and to rest in the righteousness of Christ. The temptation of presumption in our age is strong in many, and specially in those who labour to be just and good with all their might, and at the same time are ignorant of the righteousness of God, which in Christ is conferred upon us with a rich exuberance of gratuitous liberality." From this and many other passages of his writings at this period, we discover his advancing maturity in evangelical knowledge.

The following year, the work of reformation was publicly commenced by Luther. His qualifications for the work of a reformer were distinguished and pre-eminent. By nature he possessed a strong constitution, which had been preserved by temperance and labour. His genius was extraordinary; his memory vast and retentive; his magnanimity was undaunted by the greatest danger; his patience in supporting trials was invincible, and his labours were incredible. To these, as we have seen, were added the sincerest piety, and an intimate familiarity with the Word of God, whose doctrines of salvation he had learnt by experience, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Luther was not without imperfections; but his purity of manners was such as became the character of a religious reformer, and his life was a suitable illustration of his doctrine.

It is the custom of the Romish church for men to confess

their sins to the priest, for which he grants absolution. In discharging his duties as a priest, several members of the pastoral charge of Luther made confession of some atrocious offences. The usual discipline of the church in such cases was appointed, to which they refused submission, because they had purchased indulgences from Tetzel. Luther, grieved at the iniquitous imposture, wrote to some neighbouring prelates to put a stop to it: but they refused to interfere. Luther, therefore, in September 1517, published ninety-five propositions, reprobating the impudence of Tetzel, and censuring the practice of selling indulgences, as unscriptural and scandalous. In a few days, his propositions were spread into all parts of Germany, and Tetzel replied to them in counter propositions. Other papal advocates soon entered the field of controversy, violently abusing Luther, and threatening him with the stake, as a heretic, unless he recalled and condemned his published propositions.

Luther was not a man of that easy temperament, capable of being driven to deny or to conceal the truth. He continued both to preach and to write against indulgences, and the licentiousness of the clerical orders; and to explain more fully and zealously the doctrine of justification before God by faith only in the Lord Jesus Christ. For some time, Luther entertained much respect for the person and authority of the Pope; to whom he appealed against his virulent opposers. The dispute engaging the attention of all the learned in Europe, the emperor Maximilian was induced to interfere, and Luther was summoned to Rome, to make a recantation of his heresy. By the interest of the elector of Saxony, Luther's immediate sovereign, a hearing was granted to him at Augsburg, before cardinal Cajetan, who, in several interviews, in vain required him to recant; Luther insisting upon being first convinced of error, by the decisive testimony of the Scriptures. The cardinal had been commissioned to seize and imprison him, but the civil authorities permitted him to escape from the city, on a horse, which Staupitius had provided for the purpose, Oct. 19, 1518.

Luther continued to propagate his scriptural doctrines, though every possible effort was made to silence or to destroy

him: but being a man famed for learning, piety, and integrity, he was protected by his prince, the elector Frederick. Miltitz, a Saxon knight, and member of the papal court, was employed to win him over to the church, from which he had separated; but his endeavours were vain. By means of several public conferences and disputes, first between the famous Eckius and Luther, not a few persons of the greatest celebrity for learning, in different universities, embraced the opinions of Luther. This inflamed still more the rage of his enemies, who prevailed on the Pope to issue his sovereign edict, commonly called a Bull,* for the condemnation of Luther's writings, which were ordered to be burnt by the common executioner.

Maximilian, the emperor, died early in 1519, and Charles V. succeeded him in the empire. The Pope laboured to prevail on the new emperor to second his views in destroying Luther; but he, being under great obligation to the elector of Saxony, was induced to be cautious in such a procedure: yet the reformer was again required to retract his opinions, which were denounced as blasphemous heresies; and, within sixty days from the date of the Bull, June 15, 1520, to appear at Rome, and cast himself upon the mercy of the Pope. Eckius brought this famous Bull into Germany in October; but Luther regarded it with the utmost contempt, and showed its iniquitous character, and the wicked designs of its authors, in several learned tracts, which were immediately and very extensively circulated. Besides, on an appointed day, he assembled a vast concourse of people of all ranks, without the walls of Wittemberg, by making known his intentions; and having kindled a fire of an immense pile of wood, in the presence of the multitude, and of the professors and students of the university, who had walked in procession to the place, he committed to the flames the Pope's Bull, together with the volumes of the pontifical decretals, and of the canon law: thus formally renouncing all connexion with the Roman Pontiff. This bold action of Luther was performed, December 10, 1520, to the utter astonishment and confusion of his enemies.

* So termed from *bulla*, "a knob," in which form the wax of the seal to a Pope's decree was moulded.

The effect of this daring step of the reformer was wonderful: it led universally to the investigation of his doctrine, and greatly promoted its reception; while it added strength to the vindictive rage of the domineering Leo, and of his haughty prelates. As Charles V. had been recently elected emperor of Germany, the Pope, by political and other considerations, endeavoured to prevail on him to seek the destruction of Luther. The emperor was induced to call an assembly of the princes of the empire, to meet at Worms A. D. 1521, to consider the “hundred grievances” of which the people had so justly complained by various memorials; and Luther was summoned to appear before this celebrated diet, to undergo an examination of his doctrines and conduct.

SECTION III.—GERMANY (Continued.)

Luther defends himself before the emperor at Worms—He is concealed by the elector of Saxony—He translates the New and Old Testaments into German—War of the peasants—Several princes embrace Luther's doctrine—Decree of the diet at Spires—Protest of the princes—Origin of the name Protestants—Diet of Augsburg—League of Smalcalde—Anabaptists—Death of Luther.

FROM several causes the diet was delayed; but Luther continued in his evangelical course, assisted by zealous and able coadjutors. A popish historian of that period states, “Luther, in his sermons, attacked the vices of men with great acrimony: he likewise published, in the German and Latin languages, a number of religious books; for example, Expositions of the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; of certain portions of the Epistles and the Gospels; of the Song of the Blessed Virgin; of the Psalms, and particularly of the Epistle to the Galatians. Moreover, he lived a moral life, and was not given, in the smallest degree, to covetousness or any other vice; he was universally held to be a good, and great, and even a sainted man; insomuch that it was the custom to paint his portrait with rays of glory around his head, as if he had been a canonized saint!”

Though the emperor had granted him a “safe-conduct,” his friends, remembering the fate of Huss, expressed serious apprehen-

hensions for his safety: but Luther declared his resolution to obey the imperial mandate, "even if," says he, "I should meet at Worms as many devils as there are tiles on the houses." He hastened to Worms, where he was received with extraordinary marks of respect and admiration by all ranks; and many noblemen visited him at his apartments, wondering at the man who could dare, in such a manner, to set himself in opposition to the dread authority of his Holiness the Pope!

With his stores of learning and apostolic courage, in the presence of the emperor and the imperial princes, Luther defended his principles and writings, confirming them by the testimonies of the Word of God. He delivered his defence before the assembly, first in the German language, and again by their command in Latin. In vain were both arguments and arts employed to induce him to submit to the Pope, as he firmly declined to give up a single point, unless he were convinced of its error by the plain declarations of the Holy Scriptures. The emperor could not be prevailed upon to sacrifice his honour in violating his passport granted to Luther, though greatly urged to it by the prelates. Charles referred them to the perfidious conduct of the emperor Sigismund, in the case of Huss; and, by his authority, Luther was permitted to depart from the city: yet, either from a superstitious or political regard to the Pope, the diet condemned him as an obstinate heretic.

Before he retired from Worms, a plot had been formed against the life of Luther, which, being known to the elector of Saxony, that generous friend caused him to be seized on his way home, and conveyed to the castle of Wartenburg, where he was concealed until the storm had a little subsided.

During this retirement of Luther, the work of reformation and evangelical instruction was carried forward by his zealous and learned colleagues; nor was Luther himself idle in his retreat, which was indeed remarkably providential; for there, during his nine months' relaxation from active conflict, he completed the translation of the New Testament into the German language; and, after his return, with the assistance of others, he translated the Old Testament, and published the whole Bible for the general edification of his countrymen. This was

the most eminent service to the church of Christ which could have been rendered by Luther; and the direct means of establishing the cause of God and truth, to which his former labours had been devoted. Such was the rapid progress of scriptural knowledge among the people, by means of the Bible laid open in the vulgar tongue, the frequent preaching, the judicious commentaries, and the various writings, of Luther and his coadjutors, that the greatest part of Germany appeared to be dissenters, and prepared to separate from the papal communion. Many of the free cities embraced the doctrines of the reformers, and the same principles were extensively spreading in the neighbouring nations.

Erasmus, the most celebrated scholar of that age, was hired by the Pope and some English prelates, to employ his pen in confuting the doctrines of Luther: this the learned man attempted, but the controversy was rather favourable to the reformed cause, as it drew from Luther some of his most able writings.

The noble work of the reformers was considerably injured by the excessive zeal of Carolostad, in his violent demolition of the images which for ages had been worshipped in the churches. The war of the peasants, in 1525, was also injurious to the sacred cause: as, when it spread into Saxony, Muntzer, an enthusiastic man, became the head of the rebellion. Robertson, the historian, observes, “These commotions happened at first in provinces of Germany where Luther’s opinions had made little progress; and, being excited wholly by political causes, had no connexion with the disputed points in religion. But the frenzy reaching at last those countries in which the Reformation was established, derived new strength from circumstances peculiar to them, and rose to a still greater pitch of extravagance.” The most absurd notions were put forth by Muntzer, Stubner, Stork, and Callaup; and they were eagerly embraced by the ignorant, infuriated multitudes, who had risen against their feudal oppressors. The German princes united their forces to suppress these insurgents. An immense body of them was defeated by the Saxon princes and their confederates, in a battle near Mulhausen. Muntzer, their leader, was taken and put to death. No less than fifty

thousand lives are computed to have been sacrificed in this war. The principles and practices of Muntzer and his associates, though charged upon Luther by the papists, were uniformly condemned by him and by Melancthon; and Frederick, the elector, who died May 5, 1525, wrote to his brother and successor, the day before his death, in these remarkable terms: "The princes have applied to us for our assistance against the peasants; and I could wish to open my mind to them, but I am too ill. Perhaps the principal cause of these commotions is, that those poor creatures have not been allowed to have the Word of God preached fully among them."

Pope Leo X. died in 1522. Adrian VI. succeeded him; but died in the following year. Clement VII. then ascended the papal throne. Both these Pontiffs demanded, at the diet of Nuremberg, that the decree of Worms against Luther should be executed: but political difficulties arising, no decisive measures were taken to gratify their bigotry.

An ecclesiastical platform, drawn up by Luther and Melancthon, at the desire of John, the new elector, was published by heralds throughout his dominions, and the churches were supplied with learned and pious ministers.

Resolutions favourable to the reformers were passed at a diet held at Spires, in 1526; as it was unanimously agreed that every state should be allowed to pursue its own measures in religion till a general council should be called. The emperor quarrelled with the Pope; took and plundered Rome, and made Clement VII. prisoner, in 1527. By these means the cause of the reformers was but little hindered, and about half of Germany revolted from the papal system, and embraced the doctrines of the Scriptures. Charles V., being at length reconciled to the Pope, and desirous of strengthening his own interests among the princes of the empire, called another diet at Spires in 1529, to consider the state of religion. These two sovereigns united their power to destroy the liberty and beauty of scriptural religion; but their interests were widely different. The decisions of the former diet were revoked; and by a small majority it was resolved, as the emperor had demanded, that those who had obeyed the decree issued against

Luther, at Worms, should persevere in the observance of it; that no farther innovation should be made in religion; that the celebration of the mass should not be opposed; and that the Anabaptists should be capitally punished.

“The elector of Saxony, the marquis of Brandenburg, the landgrave of Hesse, the dukes of Lunenburg, the prince of Anhalt, and the deputies of fourteen imperial cities, entered a solemn protest against this decree, as unjust and impious,” April 19, 1529. From this memorable circumstance, those who have since dissented and separated from the Romish communion have been distinguished by the name of Protestants.

“Not satisfied with this declaration of their dissent from the decree of the diet, the Protestants sent ambassadors into Italy, to lay their grievances before the emperor, from whom they met with the most discouraging reception.” He even caused them to be arrested, which inflamed the minds of the Protestants, and led them to deliberate on an alliance, to defend themselves by arms against the menaces of the emperor. An appeal to arms could not obtain the sanction of Luther, and in this opposition he was joined by Melanthon and Bugenhagius.

Jealousies existing between the Pope and Charles, on account of their opposite schemes of policy, the emperor appointed another diet to be held in 1530, at Augsburg; at which, for political reasons, he was anxious to terminate the disputes about religion. The celebrated summary, called “The Confession of Augsburg,” drawn up by Melanthon, under the direction of Luther, was read to the diet, as the doctrine of the Protestants. It is said that the duke of Bavaria, having asked Eckius whether they could refute this doctrine out of the Holy Scriptures, “No,” replied the learned papist; “by the Holy Scriptures we cannot overthrow it, but we may by the Fathers.” On this the archbishop of Mentz said to the catholic duke, “See how finely our divines support us! The Protestants prove what they say out of the Holy Scriptures; but we have our doctrine without Scripture.”

Through the influence of the Pope’s nuncio, the Confession was disallowed; and the Protestant princes, refusing submission to the papal dictates, were alarmed by the passing of a dreadful decree, condemning those who rejected the

decisions of the established church. The sovereign bigotry of the Roman Pontiff, and the insatiable ambition of the political emperor, led them to conspire for the extirpation of the obnoxious doctrines which, they were aware, favoured liberty both civil and religious. Threatened thus with destruction, the Protestant princes united in their own defence, and formed the famous "League of Smalcalde." Charles V., fearing this confederacy, relented from his rigorous measures, negotiated with the princes, and terms of pacification were agreed upon at Nuremburg, which were solemnly ratified at the diet of Ratisbon, 1531. "Thus, by their firmness in adhering to their principles, the Protestants obtained terms which amounted almost to a toleration of their religion; all the concessions were made by Charles, none by them; and the Protestants of Germany, who had hitherto been viewed only as a religious sect, came henceforth to be considered as a political body of no small consequence."

The fanatic Muntzer, who had headed the peasants, and was cut off in 1525, left several disciples, who in 1534 proceeded to shocking excesses. "Two Anabaptist prophets, John Matthias, a baker, of Haerlem, and John Boccold, or Beukels, a journeyman tailor, of Leyden, possessed with the rage of making proselytes, fixed their residence in Munster, an imperial city of Westphalia. Having secretly called in their associates from the neighbouring country, they suddenly took possession of the arsenal and senate-house in the night-time, and running through the streets with drawn swords, and horrible howlings, cried out alternately, 'Repent, and be baptized,' and 'Depart, ye ungodly.' The senators, the canons, the nobility, together with the more sober citizens, whether Papists or Protestants, terrified at their threats and outcries, fled in confusion, and left the city under the dominion of a frantic multitude, consisting chiefly of strangers." The most absurd extravagances were practised in new modelling the government of the city; and the bishop of Munster approaching with an army, Matthias soon fell a sacrifice to his own rashness; and Boccold was declared, by the deluded multitude, "King of Zion," and ordained of God, "to sit on the throne of David." Kneeling down, Boccold "accepted the heavenly call, which

he solemnly protested had been revealed to himself.” By this fanatic king and his subjects, “every excess was committed of which the passions of men are capable, when restrained neither by the authority of laws, nor the sense of decency; and, by a monstrous and almost incredible conjunction, voluptuousness was engrafted on religion, and dissolute riot accompanied the austerities of fanatical devotion.”

Luther was grieved beyond expression to hear of these enormities, in those who professed to regard the Scriptures; and after denouncing both their principles and practices, “called upon the states of Germany to put a stop to their frenzy, no less pernicious to society than fatal to religion.” The princes united, besieged and took the city, and Boccold, after enduring tortures the most exquisite and lingering, was put to death at Munster in 1535, aged only twenty years!

The political circumstances of the ambitious emperor not allowing him to give much attention to the affairs of religion in the empire, Luther was enabled to proceed in his labours of reformation, until the year 1546, when he died in peace, at Eisleben, his native town, on the 18th of February, aged sixty-three years. To that place he travelled, though ill, for the purpose of arbitrating in a dispute between the counts of Mansfield, respecting the mines in which his father’s labours had supported him in his infancy. Some of the last words of this great man were, “O my heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God, thou hast revealed to me thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I have preached him, I have confessed him, I love him, and I worship him, as my dearest Saviour and Redeemer:—him, whom the Pope and the wicked persecute, despise, and blaspheme.” He then repeated, three times, the words of the psalm, “Into thy hands I commit my spirit: God of truth, thou hast redeemed me;” and fainting, he departed to his God and Saviour!

The report of his death filled the Roman Catholics with excessive joy, which they expressed with indecency and extravagance, while it damped the spirits of his followers; both forgetting, that the doctrines which Luther had preached were not the inventions of human policy, and could not die with him; but substantially the restored principles of “the glorious

gospel of the blessed God," in the preservation of which, omnipotent grace is engaged by an everlasting covenant, for the salvation of the church of Christ, which he has redeemed out of all nations.

SECTION IV.—GERMANY (Continued.)

War upon the Protestants by the emperor—The Interim—Consequent persecutions—Maurice turns against the emperor—Peace of religion—Toleration granted by it—Charles V. resigns his throne to his son Philip—Genuine religion among the Lutherans—George, prince of Anhalt—Melancthon—Westonbechius—Clotzius—Cureus.

BEFORE the decease of Luther, matters were approaching to a crisis between the emperor and the Protestants; and, having concluded a war with the Turks, he turned his arms against them. Having gained over Maurice, duke of Saxony, Charles marched against the elector, defeated and took him prisoner, 1547. He bestowed the dominions of the captive prince on his ambitious nephew, Maurice, as the reward of his treachery in abandoning his uncle. Philip, landgrave of Hesse, was prevailed upon, by his son-in-law Maurice, to submit to the emperor, on condition of pardon; but he treacherously detained him a prisoner, with John Frederick. The emperor led about the two captive princes as monuments of his triumph, and treated the Protestant leaders with the utmost contempt; but, being thwarted by the political contrivances of the Pope, in 1548, he appointed three divines to draw up a platform of religion, which was called the Interim. This formula, though somewhat yielding, was essentially popish, but expressed in ambiguous language. Charles proceeded to enforce this rule upon the Protestant clergy; those who refused to subscribe he imprisoned, and led them in chains after him when he departed from Augsburg. Bitter and cruel were the persecutions which followed. Melancthon lamented this desolation, saying, "Upwards of four hundred pastors in Suabia, and the circles of the Rhine, are driven from their stations; and there is but a single officiating minister at this moment in Tubingen, who conforms to the book published at Augsburg: it had the effect of driving

away all the pastors and teachers." The Saxon divines, under the direction of Maurice, yielded to the Interim, with Melancthon's qualifying distinction, "as a rule in things indifferent;" and the crafty elector was appointed by Charles generalissimo, to enforce the Interim at Magdeburg. This service was soon accomplished, and thus the emperor was deceived, until all arrangements had been made, and to his utter surprise and astonishment, Maurice declared war against him! The elector was received joyfully in all the towns in his march against the emperor; their deposed magistrates he reinstated, and restored the ejected ministers of the gospel. By rapid marches he advanced to fall upon the emperor at Innspruck, from which he with difficulty escaped in the most miserable condition, only a few hours before Maurice entered, leaving all his baggage a prey to the soldiers of the elector, 1552.

The emperor being defeated in all his schemes of aggrandizement, was necessitated to yield to the demands of Maurice; who, having obtained the electorate, which had been the chief object of his ambition, now insisted on the unrestricted toleration of the Lutherans; the release of the landgrave; and a redress of the grievances of Germany. The toleration was granted by the famous "Pacification of Passau," 1552, and at length it was solemnly ratified, September 25, 1555, at Augsburg.

The principle articles of this "Peace of Religion" were, "that for the future, no attempt shall be made towards terminating religious differences, but by the gentle methods of persuasion and conference:—that popish ecclesiastics shall claim no jurisdiction over Protestants:—that states and free cities shall have right to choose their own form of religious doctrine and worship, and those who dissent shall have leave to retire with their property." This treaty was the foundation of religious toleration in Germany; altogether offensive to the Pope and his court, and granted by the emperor Charles V. only as a measure of absolute necessity. The difficulties that were to be surmounted before this equitable decision could be procured, the tedious deliberations, the violent animosities, and the bloody wars, which were necessary to engage the popish part of the German states to consent to

conditions so rational, demonstrate to us the ignorance and superstition of these miserable times, and furnish the most evident proofs of the necessity of the Reformation.

The Peace of Religion being ratified, Charles V., the ambitious emperor of Germany, to the astonishment of all Europe, resigned his hereditary dominions, and retired into private life. He was induced to take this extraordinary step through chagrin at the failure of his latter military operations; the declining state of his health, by which he was incapable of renewing his despotic projects; and the haughty behaviour of his son Philip. He executed the deeds of resignation with all the pomp of imperial greatness; and, laying aside the robes of royalty, he retired early in 1556 to a monastery at Placentia, in Spain, and died in 1558, aged fifty-eight years. It is said, that in his retirement he inclined to the Protestant doctrines. He amused himself with mechanical contrivances; and, as he could not bring any two clocks to keep time exactly alike, he reflected on his own folly in shedding so much blood, to force men to a uniformity of opinion on the profound mysteries of religion. The latter days of this once dreaded emperor were distinguished by the most weak and pitiable timorousness, and the most extreme wretchedness of a gloomy superstition.

A great part of Germany was blessed with the privileges of the Reformation, and enjoyed the free use of Luther's translation of the Scriptures, his larger and smaller catechism for children, the force of doctrine in the Augsburg confession, a multitude of evangelical writings, doctrinal, practical, and devotional, and the faithful ministry of the gospel. Great numbers of sinners were converted to God, like as in the apostolic age; brought into the church of Christ, and saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. Before the close of the century, however, an evident declension from the soundness of doctrine prevailed in the Lutheran churches; yet the power of experimental Christianity was realized by many, as will be evident by a few brief notices of some of the distinguished persons of those days.

George, prince of Anhalt, was converted by means of Luther's writings; and, conversing with learned men, and prayerfully

reading the Holy Scriptures, which he could do in the Hebrew and Greek, he embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, and became a Protestant bishop. He was a man of eminent piety and meekness, and he died in 1553, after repeating the words of Christ, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son," &c., and, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Melancthon was the faithful friend and learned colleague of Luther for many years, in carrying on the work of reformation. He was a man of unusual moderation, and sterling piety. A short time before his death, he wrote the reasons why he wished to leave this world, and enter heaven. Among others, he expressed the following:—"I shall cease from sin—I shall be freed from the vexatious disputes of divines—I shall come to the light—I shall see God—I shall look upon the Son of God—I shall learn those mysteries which I could not understand in this life." To his anxious attendants, inquiring if he wished any thing, he replied, "Nothing but heaven," and begged they would not disturb his delightful repose. He died 1560.

Wessonbechius, a lawyer of Wittemberg, was a diligent reader of the Psalms and the New Testament. He died 1556, in the full assurance of hope, after repeating the words of the apostle, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." To his friend, he said, "Now the Lord hath given me a sight of the everlasting joy in which I shall be quickly, and which my great longing is to have hastened." In expiring, he exclaimed, "I am in covenant with Jesus."

Clotzius, chancellor to the landgrave of Hesse, when dying, expressed himself thus: "The whole of my life is placed in God.—O let thy servant depart in peace. Thou art my sure anchor, my salvation, and only refuge. Now the honours of this world, and all momentary things, yea, life itself, is distasteful, in respect of those eternal joys for which I breathe, and to which I joyfully hasten."

Joachim Cureus, a physician of eminence, after a life of

devotedness to God, died 1573. Among other of his dying expressions, are the following :—“ I am oppressed, Lord, but it is enough that thy hand hath done it. My body now suffers because of sin, but my soul is raised up and comforted with the assurance of eternal life.—Now my heart is quite inflamed with the views of everlasting life.—With desire to come to thee, my soul hopes for joy. O dissolve me, that I may come to thee ! As the traveller in the dark night looks for the rising sun, so do I earnestly look for that brightness which is in the immediate vision of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—I shall see my exalted Saviour in the flesh ; and there bless him for all the blessings I have had from him. Now I die, witnessing to the truth of the prophets and apostles, and adhering to the Augustan Confession, and blessing the Lord, who, in his marvellous goodness, hath made the light to arise in so much darkness.”

SECTION V.—GERMANY (Continued.)

Orthodoxy of the churches of the reformers—Antinomians—Socinians—Mennonites.

AMONG the multitudes who separated from the Romish communion, there were some who held the most extravagant and unsound opinions. But the pious part of the reformers, in the different nations, were agreed on all the fundamental principles of Christianity.

From the testimony of the Scriptures they embraced the doctrines concerning the guilt and corruption of human nature—the true and essential divinity of Jesus Christ—his incarnation, substitution, and death, as a propitiation for sin—justification by faith in his righteousness and atonement—regeneration and sanctification by the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit—and the necessity of personal holiness, as the characteristic of the adopted children of God.

The lawless Antinomians abused these holy doctrines; maintaining “ that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law ;” and, therefore, they, perverting the truth, dis-

allowed the obligations of holiness, and the authority of the moral law.

Lelius and Faustus Socinus, who were learned physicians, revived the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus, which had been refuted and condemned by the apostle John. Their name gave a denomination to a small sect which, after its founders, was called Socinians.

It has been observed already, that early in the Reformation there arose a sect in Germany by which infant baptism was rejected as unscriptural. They were called Anabaptists from their baptizing anew those who joined them. At first their leaders were outrageously fanatical, seeking to destroy all civil government: but they were moderated and reformed by the zealous and indefatigable labours of the pious Simon Menno, and became especially numerous in Holland.

CHAPTER II.

SWITZERLAND.

Zuinglius expounds the Scriptures—Opposes indulgences — Other reformers —Wolfgang—Capito and Oecolampadius—Nine popish cantons take up arms against the Protestants—Zuinglius murdered—Bullinger.

WHILE Luther was labouring to promote the noble work of reformation in Germany, God graciously caused the light of evangelical truth to shine upon Switzerland. Several eminent men arose in succession to bless the cantons of that favoured land. In 1516, Zuinglius, a canon of Zurich, of learning perhaps superior to Luther, and of like intrepidity of spirit, expounded the Scriptures, and testified against the abominations of popery. Samson, an Italian monk, selling indulgences in Switzerland in 1517, roused the indignation of Zuinglius, who, being encouraged by some learned colleagues, who had been educated in Germany, boldly opposed the impious traffic.

Pope Adrian in vain endeavoured to gain Zuinglius by promises. He employed Faber, afterwards bishop of Vienna,

to dispute with him; but the reformer, appealing to the Word of God, was unconquered. He published his sentiments in 1523, in sixty-seven particulars, all confirmed by passages of Holy Scripture.

At Basil, in 1520, Wolfgang, Capito, and Ecolampadius, introduced the doctrines of the Reformation with success.

In 1522, Hofmeister published them in Scaphæusen, and Haller maintained them in Berne.

The cantons of Zurich, Basil, Berne, Schaffhausen, and also parts of Aphenzel and Glaris, having embraced the Reformation, were obnoxious to the nine popish cantons, who took up arms to compel them to return to the Catholic church. They were resisted by the troops of the reformed party. Zuinglius accompanied them as chaplain, in 1531, and fell in one of their engagements. The papists found him lying among the wounded, with eyes uplifted to heaven; and, as he would not comply with their wishes, to confess to the Virgin Mary, they murdered him. The same year, many having perished on both sides by the sword, a peace was concluded on the condition that each canton should retain its own form of religion. The celebrated Helvetic confession of faith was prepared and adopted by their synod in 1566.

Zuinglius was succeeded in the church of Zurich by Bullinger, a man worthy of that age. After labouring for the faith of Christ, he died in the assured hope of glory, in 1575. Death approaching, among other delightful things he said, "I rejoice exceedingly to be taken from this corrupt age, to get to my Saviour Christ. I am sure that I shall see my Saviour Christ, the saints, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and all the holy men who have lived from the beginning of the world. Since I am sure to partake of their felicity, why should not I be willing to die, to enjoy their perpetual society in glory?"

CHAPTER III.

FRANCE.

Waldenses numerous in France—They send to Luther—Queen of Navarre favours the Protestants—They flourish—Francis I. a persecutor—Calvin—Increase of the Protestants in France—Massacre of the Protestants under Charles IX.—Pope Gregory XIII. offers a solemn mass for his bloody work—Henry IV. grants protection by the Edict of Nantz.

AT the commencement of the sixteenth century, it was found that the persecuted Waldenses, though they had been so dreadfully oppressed, were not wholly extirpated. They estimated their own numbers at eight hundred thousand persons. Hearing of the fame of Luther, and having learnt that his doctrines were agreeable with the Scriptures, they entered into a correspondence with him. His recently published writings were sought, by which their own minds were established in the truth, and their active graces encouraged. Thus the doctrines of the Reformation were embraced by multitudes in the southern parts of France; among whom learning had begun to revive, under the patronage of Francis I. Margaret, his sister, the queen of Navarre, at an early period afforded protection to the reformers to the extent of her power.

The reformed doctrines were countenanced by the bishop of Meaux, who encouraged James le Fevre, d'Etaples, William Farel, and Gerard le Roux, in preaching the gospel. Many embraced the truth, but a persecution arose, and the members of the church, formed at Meaux, were scattered through the nation.

In 1524, John le Clerc, founder of the reformed church at Metz, endured many torments for the gospel, and was there burnt alive. Numerous sacrifices of the same kind were made by the superstitious bigotry or the popish policy of Francis, who, in 1535, assisted in person, bareheaded, in a grand procession at Paris, while he witnessed the burning of six of his Protestant subjects.

The queen of Navarre protected James le Fevre, Gerard

le Roux, and John Calvin, in their labours to spread the light of divine truth.

Calvin was singularly endowed, by the Father of lights, for eminent services in the church of Christ. He was a man of extraordinary genius, immense learning, and flowing eloquence; to which were added the most elevated piety, and indefatigable industry. All his talents were consecrated to the cause of Christ, from 1534, when he embraced the doctrines of the Reformation. He endured various persecutions from the king of France; to whom he dedicated his famous work, entitled, "Institutes of the Christian Religion," and in 1536, settled at Geneva. His numerous, learned, and orthodox commentaries, and other writings, rendered his name high authority; and, by his learning and wisdom, he became the principal director to all the reformers, in every nation throughout Europe, after the death of Luther.

It seems probable, that in France the Protestants were almost as numerous as in any other kingdom. In 1570, it is reported, there were two thousand one hundred and fifty congregations in France, some of them containing two thousand members! But they were not allowed to increase without molestation. It is believed, that in no country have there been persecutions of a more barbarous character than in France. Volumes might be filled with the most affecting instances of martyrdom.

Francis I. was the rival of Charles V., and the destructive wars between these two monarchs, led them frequently to court the assistance of the Pope, sacrificing the Protestants in their several states, to propitiate his favour. The French king, to gratify his Holiness, showed his zeal for the church by dreadful persecutions of the Waldenses, and of those embracing the reformed doctrines. In the height of his zeal, he was heard to declare, "that if he thought the blood of his arm was tainted with the Lutheran heresy, he would cut it off; and that he would not spare his own children, if they entertained sentiments contrary to those of the Catholic church." Under such a king dissenters must necessarily suffer: a long succession, therefore, of the most shocking martyrdoms tried the faith, and exemplified the patience of

the church in France. But their most dreadful sufferings were endured in 1572. The pages of history do not record such another instance of monstrous treachery and malignant barbarity, as were perpetrated that year in France, under the cloak of the religion of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. The Pope and his agents influenced the king of France to resolve upon exterminating, by one decisive effort, all the dissenters of the Romish church. For this purpose, many of the principal Protestants were invited to Paris, under a solemn oath of safety, to celebrate the marriage of the king of Navarre with the French king's sister. The queen dowager of Navarre, a zealous Protestant, was destroyed before the marriage was solemnized, by means of poison concealed in a pair of gloves! The inhuman butchery commenced, at the tolling of the bell on St. Bartholomew's-day, by the murder of Admiral Coligni, who had been shot at and wounded two days previously. The hypocritical king of France visited him, and declared that the admiral's wound was his own. The shocking work was conducted by the duke of Guise, urged on by Charles IX., the king himself, in person. In the space of three days, ten thousand Protestants were sacrificed to popish bigotry in Paris alone, by every kind of savage destruction; no distinction being made on account of rank or learning, sex or age. The massacre extended to all places in which these scriptural dissenters were known or suspected; and it is calculated, that not less than a hundred thousand were at this time destroyed.

This horrible tragedy was well known to have been contrived by the Fathers of the Romish church. Medals to commemorate it were struck at Paris. The annunciation of this shocking deed was received by the clergy in Spain, and at Rome, with expressions of unbounded exultation. The man who brought the news to Rome was rewarded with a thousand crowns; and when the letters of the papal legate, residing at the French court, were read in the assembly of cardinals, it was decreed, that the Pope should march with his cardinals to the church of St. Mark, to offer solemn thanks to God for so signal a blessing conferred on the See of Rome!

Persons of rank were not spared in this sacrifice made to bigotry. Even the Protestant king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, were devoted to the same destruction: but their lives were spared on their professing themselves reconciled to the Romish church; the king of France with a terrible oath, proposing to them, "mass, death, or the bastile for life." It is collected from authentic records, that during forty years, in the middle of this century, not less than a million of Protestants were, in France, sacrificed to the unrelenting tyranny of the papal power!

These inhuman proceedings excited the sympathy of the Protestant states, especially England, where great numbers enjoyed a secure asylum, with liberty of religious worship. Many escaped to Geneva and Switzerland; and not a few turned papists: but there yet remained a considerable number, of whom some were persons of rank, and who took up arms to defend themselves in the fortified towns. In 1598, Henry IV., of Navarre, succeeded to the throne of France, and granted the famous "Edict of Nantz." This decree was called "Irrevocable;" by which they were allowed liberty of conscience, the free exercise of their religion, and access to all places of trust and dignity. With this security, the Hugonots, as these dissenters were called, became prodigiously increased, to the serious mortification of the bigoted partizans of Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

NETHERLANDS.

Writings of the Reformers circulated in the Netherlands—Persecutions—Many Martyrs—Cruel bigotry of the Emperor Charles V.—His son Philip—Protestants increase—Murders of the Duke of Alva—Revolt of seven provinces—United provinces—Simon Menno.

LUTHER's writings, at an early period, were extensively circulated in the Netherlands, where many received his doctrine. As these provinces belonged to Charles V., that emperor prohibited all books containing any allusion to the

Scriptures ; and commissioned Francis Vander Hulst, his chancellor in Brabant, in 1521, to see that his orders were obeyed. Erasmus designates him as "a great enemy to learning," and his colleague, Van Egmont, "a madman into whose hands they had put a sword." They executed their commission with a furious zeal, imprisoning many on the mere suspicion of heresy.

Cornelius Graphaeus, secretary to the city of Antwerp, saved his life by recanting on the scaffold. The Austin friars of that city were discovered possessing the works of Luther ; and many of them were imprisoned. Three of them were condemned to the flames in 1523. Henry Voes and John Esch were executed together, singing the " Te Deum " till they expired : the third was put to death in the prison. They were executed at Brussels, where their principles had not been embraced : but this lesson of pious constancy, in suffering for Christ, led many in that place to entertain Lutheranism. Holland, Zealand, and Flanders, generally embraced the doctrines of Luther : many of the divinity professors and persons of eminence favoured them, and their cause was espoused by persons of all ranks. John Van Backer, a young priest, was strangled and burnt in 1525 ; but, in passing to the place of execution, his companions in prison for the gospel encouraged him by hymns, and shouts, and clapping of hands. His constancy affected the judges, and led them to spare the lives of the others.

Year after year, the emperor ordered placards to be published against the Scriptures. Men who were convicted of relapsing to Lutheranism were to suffer by the sword, and women were to be buried alive !

Philip succeeded his father, Charles V., and laboured with superlative bigotry to extirpate all who refused subjection to the Pope. But truth advanced, though the inquisition was employed with all its awful terrors.

The reformed continued to increase, and in 1563 they published their Confession of Faith. In 1566 they held their first public meeting, in a field near the city of Horn ; where, to satisfy the eagerness of the people to hear the Word of God, the ministers preached for four hours.

"The duke of Alva, of infamous memory," was sent with an army to destroy them; and he "poured out the Protestant blood as water on every side; while one hundred and twenty thousand fled from the persecution."

Roused with indignation at such barbarities, William, prince of Orange, undertook the deliverance of his native country; which he accomplished with troops levied among the refugees and German Protestants. The mortified king of Spain recalled the duke of Alva; but "the monster boasted that he had delivered into the hands of the executioner above eighteen thousand heretics and rebels, besides those who died in the war!" The civil war terminated in the formation of a new Protestant state in Europe, under the title of "the Seven United Provinces."

The Protestants of the Netherlands were Calvinists, and their form of ecclesiastical government was modelled upon the Presbyterian plan.

The cause of truth was seriously injured by the Anabaptists, who overran the Netherlands. Their enormities were condemned by Calvin, as well as Luther. Rejecting the obligations of the Divine law, they seemed actuated by a diabolical spirit; endeavouring to massacre both priests and magistrates. About forty of them attempted to set on fire the city of Leyden; but the mob not assisting them, they were apprehended, and fifteen men and five of the women were executed in 1535.

This sect was reformed by Simon Menno, who had been a Romish priest, until he was converted to the faith of Christ in 1530. He was induced to assume the office of a public teacher in 1536; and afterwards he appeared as their principal leader. Menno was a man of genius and superior talents, possessing a natural and persuasive eloquence: he was a person of probity, of a meek spirit, gentle in his manners, and apostolical in his zeal; labouring in several neighbouring countries to promote evangelical religion, which he recommended both by precept and example: he condemned the extravagancies of the first Anabaptists, the prelatical claims, and the popish superstitions, and aimed at nothing more than what appeared to him its scriptural purity. For more than thirty years, Menno laboured in the ministry, both by preaching and writing; and, under

his zeal and prudence, this denomination increased in the United Provinces into numerous churches. Menno died at the seat of a nobleman in the duchy of Holstein, in 1561, greatly and deservedly honoured.

CHAPTER V.

ITALY.

Light of the Reformation penetrates Italy—Peter Martyr—Bernard Ochino—Many martyrs—Testimony from Fox.

ITALY itself, “the seat of the beast,” the peculiar province of the Pope, was penetrated with the light of the gospel at the Reformation; and, notwithstanding the vigilance of the papal emissaries, and the terrors of the inquisition, many received the truth in the love of it, to their salvation.

In all the provinces of Italy, but more particularly in the territories of Venice, Tuscany, and Naples, the dogmas of Rome sunk in the estimation of the people; and great numbers, of all ranks, expressed their aversion to the papal yoke.

Peter Martyr, who afterwards was one of the learned professors in the university of Oxford, and Bernard Ochino, were the chief instruments in exposing the enormities of the reigning superstition, and in promoting the knowledge of the pure gospel in Italy. The emperor Charles V. heard Ochino preach at Naples; and he is said to have declared, that “he preached with such spirit and devotion as was sufficient to make the very stones to weep.”

Romish bigotry quickly employed a host of inquisitors, who immediately spread horror throughout Italy, and in a few years succeeded in destroying the fruit of the Reformation in that country.

At Rome, and in other cities, numbers suffered on account of their faith. Galeacius, firmly established in the Protestant doctrine, was burnt as a heretic, after having suffered for several hours chained to the stake, where it was hoped that his wife would prevail with him to recant his opinions, and deny the gospel.

Encenas, a Spaniard, was sacrificed in like manner, at the stake.

Dr. Mollius laboured in preaching, especially lecturing upon the epistle to the Romans, very extensively and successfully, and died triumphing in the gospel of Christ. He was strangled, and then burnt.

Faninus, an eminent scholar, while in prison, was induced by his wife and children, with other friends, to recant. Being distressed at having denied the doctrine of Christ he re solved on making known the gospel at all hazards. Throughout Romania he preached the truth with great success; but he was apprehended, and after about three years' imprisonment, he was burnt at the stake. To the officer who brought the order of Pope Julius III., that he should be executed, he preached a long sermon on the felicity of a future life; and on being asked how he could leave his wife and little children, Faninus replied, "That he left them with an overseer, who would see to them sufficiently." Delivered to the secular magistrates, his words, gestures, and countenance, declared such constancy of faith, and modesty of manners, and tranquillity of mind, that those who before had believed him to be the most dangerous heretic, began to commend him. Such grace and sweetness distinguished his speech, that while speaking of the blessed Word of God, the wives of the magistrates being present, could not refrain from weeping. Even the hardened executioner wept!

Galeazius Tricius, a man of property, was burned at Pompea: he died in a manner worthy of his Christian profession.

Venice was sanctified by the blood of many martyrs. Francis Spinola, a man of learning, encouraging Sega, a fellow-prisoner, who complained that his soul was distressed by the tidings that he was to suffer that evening, said, like a servant of Christ, "Fear not, it will not be long before it will feel those joys which will endure for ever." Sega, being in the boat, on his way to the place of execution, a friar exhorted him to return into the right way: to whom he replied, "I am already in the way of our Lord Jesus Christ." Spinola went to the place of drowning, expressing a cheerful hope of eternal happiness at God's right hand.

Anthony Ricetti, in his reply to his son, who entreated him to abandon the Protestant profession of the faith, said, “I am resolved to sacrifice every thing in this transitory world for the sake of salvation in a world that will last for eternity. A Christian is bound to leave, not only goods and children, but life itself, for the glory of the Redeemer.”

Pomponius Algerius, a native of Capua, a student at the university of Padua, embraced the gospel, and diffused the knowledge of it among his fellow-students. He was apprehended by order of the magistrates of Venice, and by them he was sent to Rome, where he was burnt in the presence of admiring crowds.

A letter from a Catholic, dated 1560, mentions the execution of eighty-eight, slaughtered at one time. It was addressed to a nobleman—“ Hitherto, most noble lord, I have certified you, what here daily hath been done about these heretics. Now cometh next to signify unto your lordship, the horrible judgment begun this present day, being the 11th of June, to be executed early in the morning against the Lutherans ; which, when I think upon, I verily quake and tremble. For they being all thrust up in one house together, as in a sheep-fold, the executioner cometh in amongst them, taketh one and blindfoldeth him with a muffler about his eyes, and so leadeth him forth to a larger place near adjoining, where he commandeth him to kneel down ; which being so done, he cutteth his throat, and leaving him half dead, and taking his butcher’s knife and muffler, all of gore and blood, which the Italians call beuda, cometh again to the rest, and so leading one after another, he dispatched them all, which were to the number of eighty-eight. This spectacle to behold, and doleful and horrible it was, I leave to your lordship’s judgment, for to write of it, I myself cannot choose but weep ; neither was there any of the beholders present, who seeing one die, could abide to behold the death of another. But so humbly and patiently they went to death, as is almost incredible to believe.

“ It is moreover appointed, (and the carts be come already,) that all those so put to death should be quartered, and so conveyed in the carts to the hithermost parts of Calabria, where they shall be hanged upon poles to the highways, and other

places, even in the confines of the same country ; unless the Pope's Holiness, and the lord viceroy of Naples, shall give it in commandment to the lord marquis of Buccianus, governor of the said province, to stay his hand, he will proceed with the rack and torture, that he will nigh dispatch them all. This day is also determined, that a hundred of the more ancient women should appear to be examined and racked, and after to be put to death, that the mixture may be perfect, for so many men so many women. And thus have you that I can say of this justice. Now, it is about two of the clock in the afternoon, shortly we shall hear what some of them said, when they went to execution. There be certain of them so obstinate, that they will not look upon the crucifix, nor be confessed to the priest, and they shall be burnt alive. The heretics that be apprehended and condemned, are to the number of one thousand six hundred ; but as yet, no more, but these aforesaid eighty-eight are already executed!"*

Further details would exceed our limits, but by such horrible means was the light of the gospel extinguished in Italy !

CHAPTER VI.

BOHEMIA, MORAVIA, POLAND, PRUSSIA, HUNGARY, AND TRANSYLVANIA.

Hussites and Moravians—Oppressed by Lewis and Ferdinand—Poland visited by Zuinglian Ministers—Other Preachers—Union of the Protestants—Prussia—Various Protestant preachers—Persecutions—Hungary and Transylvania.

DIVINE light has been widely diffused by means of the Waldenses, and the Bohemian or Moravian brethren, who descended from the purer class of the Hussites. Luther's ministerial labours were soon heard of by these people ; and so early as the year 1522, they sent deputies to him to recommend themselves to his friendship. Having examined their confession of faith, and finding scarcely any thing to which he

* Fox's Martyrs.

could object, Luther manifested much good-will to them. By the kings of Bohemia, Lewis and Ferdinand, these descendants of the Hussite confessors were grievously oppressed; yet, like the Hebrews in Egypt, “the more they were afflicted, the more they grew and multiplied.” After the death of Luther, and their expulsion from their country in 1547, a new direction was given to their religious connexions, and the Bohemian brethren were scattered widely into the surrounding countries.

Poland was visited, during the life of Luther, by some of his disciples, as well as by some Zuinglian divines from Switzerland; and now three classes of reformers were found in this country, each of which adopted the fundamental principles of the Reformation, but differing in their views of the Lord’s Supper. These classes were the Bohemian Brethren, the Lutherans, and the Zuinglians. Though instigated by the Pope, Sigismund Augustus, king of Poland, was not greatly disposed to persecute them, and they very much increased. Aware of the advantages which a people must derive from a full toleration in religion, he pronounced in 1563 a solemn promulgation of religious liberty.

For the purpose of strengthening their religious bonds, and of defending themselves with the greater vigour against the papists, the Bohemians and Zuinglians, in 1555, commenced a union in the synod of Chrenick and Gulochow, and finished it in that of Gosminick. They then endeavoured to bring the Lutherans to unite with them, and agreed upon articles of confederation, in a synod, held at Sendomir in 1570, expressing the disputed points, which each party might regard as important, in moderate terms. These articles were repeatedly ratified in succeeding synods, until 1595, but perfect cordiality was not manifested by the Lutherans.

Prussia, now a kingdom, at the time of the Reformation only a dukedom, received the light of evangelical truth from the Lutheran divines. Its vicinity to Saxony favoured the introduction of the doctrines taught by the reformers. Polentz, bishop of Samland, countenanced the gospel preachers, among whom were Sperat, Brisman, and Poliander, whose success in the ministry of the gospel was remarkable.

Nicholas Amsdorff, bishop of Nuremburg, was a zealous Lutheran. But, in Prussia, these devoted labourers were severely persecuted. Leonard Keyser, though only a student, was burnt; and also Peter Spengler, a faithful minister of Schalet. This useful man, after having preached a discourse on the words in John xvii. 21, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us," was drowned in the river.

Hungary and Transylvania were partly enlightened by the Waldenses and Hussites; and, at an early period, they were visited by some of the disciples of Luther, by whom numbers were engaged to renounce the errors of popery, and to embrace the truth of the gospel. The writings of Luther were eagerly sought, and diligently read; and by the labours of Cyriae and his colleagues, large additions were made to the true church of Christ. Matthias Devay, assisted by several others, Zuinglians, were very successful in their ministry, and they were strengthened in their work by Szegedin and other Calvinists. Differences existed among these classes of Protestants in their view of the eucharist, and some uncharitable contentions ensued; but, notwithstanding these, a large measure of eminent piety existed among these several denominations.

CHAPTER VII.

SWEDEN, DENMARK, AND NORWAY.

Popery in Denmark and Sweden—Gustavus Vasa Ericson supports Protestant preachers—Public conference between popish and Protestant preachers—Domination of popery abolished—Denmark—Christian II. from policy countenances the reformers—Frederick secures liberty in Denmark for every subject to choose his religion—Christian III. completes the Reformation.

No countries, at the period of the Reformation, were more grievously oppressed by the power of the papacy than Denmark and Sweden. The national wealth was swallowed up by the clergy, who had degraded the ancient nobility, and reduced them almost to poverty. The episcopal revenues equalled, or even exceeded those of the sovereign; and the

bishops possessed castles and fortresses, by which they set at defiance the power of the king. Their wealth occasioned the most shocking corruptions of manners; which, indeed, prepared the way for the Reformation, when their pernicious domination was overthrown.

The Reformation was effected in both these countries under the patronage of the sovereigns.

Gustavus Vasa Ericson, after many difficulties and sufferings, delivered his country from the usurpation and cruelties of Christian II., king of Denmark, and was elevated to the throne in 1520. Having become acquainted with the Reformation, during the period of his exile, he favoured the Lutheran doctrines, which had been introduced into Sweden by Olaus Petri, and his brother Laurentius, both students under the great German reformer. Gustavus supported these zealous men in their labours, who, with the assistance of Lawrence Andreas, made a translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue. The popish bishops opposed this work; but the king urged them to publish a translation of their own, that the people might be able to ascertain the truth.

Peter Gallius, a zealous defender of popery, complaining of the new doctrines, Gustavus appointed a public conference between him and Olaus, which took place, and by it the Protestant cause was eminently served, as the Lutheran advocate gained a complete victory. The following year, 1527, Gustavus completed the Reformation at an assembly of the states. On that occasion, he is said to have declared, in reference to the popish opposition, "that he would lay down his sceptre, and retire from his kingdom, rather than rule a people enslaved to the order and authority of the Pope, and more controlled by the tyranny of their bishops, than by the laws of the monarch."

The domination of popery was at once abolished, and the Reformation was established with but little difficulty. With the Lutheran doctrine, a reduced form of episcopacy was retained, and Laurentius Petri was appointed archbishop of Upsal.

Denmark received the light of the Reformation about 1521. Christian II., though a monster of cruelty, desired to have his

subjects instructed in the doctrines of Luther. He is believed to have desired this change, not from any love to the gospel of Christ, but that he might attain to the supremacy both in church and state, and that it might afford him a pretext for depriving the bishops of their extravagant authority and their great possessions.

Christian first invited Martin Reinard, a pupil of Carlostadt, from Saxony, in 1520, and appointed him professor of divinity at Hafnia. This worthy divine dying the following year, the Danish monarch invited Carlostadt himself to fill that office. He accepted it, but stayed only a short time. In 1523 Christian II. was deposed and banished, and his uncle Frederick, duke of Holstein, placed on the throne. He was a moderate prince, encouraging the Lutheran preachers, but suffering no violence to be used by either party. Frederick nobly served the cause of the Reformation by procuring an edict from the states that assembled at Odensee in 1527, which secured liberty to every subject of Denmark to choose his own religion.

The Protestant ministers laboured with such zeal and success, that the Danes generally embraced their doctrine, doubtless, many of them to the saving of their souls.

Christian III., a prince equally distinguished for his piety and prudence, was honoured to complete this good work in Denmark. He commenced by a wise and righteous policy, taking the ill-gotten possessions from the clergy, and restoring them to the despoiled families and individuals who were their rightful owners. He then appointed for the whole kingdom a system of doctrine, discipline, and worship, drawn up by Bugenhagius, whom he had sent for from Wittemberg, on account of his eminent piety, learning, and moderation. All these arrangements received the solemn sanction of the states in 1539, in an assembly at Odensee.

Norway, being incorporated with Denmark, shared in its fortune for several centuries before this period, and the Lutheran doctrine was promulgated in that barren country from Denmark.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

Light from the Waldenses penetrates Spain—Several chaplains and officers in the army of Charles V., carry the gospel from Germany—Chaplains of the emperor martyred after his death—Prince Don Carlos put to death in prison for the gospel—Divines of Isidore college—Female martyrs in Spain.

DARKNESS of the most gloomy character brooded over Spain and Portugal, at the period of the Reformation. Some zealous preachers had arisen in the middle of the fifteenth century, enlightened, it is supposed, by the Waldenses, from the south of France: but they were persecuted by the inquisitors, and some of them were burnt alive at Valladolid. By these shocking measures the light of eternal life was extinguished.

Charles V., king of Spain and emperor of Germany, having constant intercourse with those countries in which the reformers were carrying on their successful labours, brought his soldiers and chaplains into contact with the truth, and some of them received it as taught by Luther and his colleagues. In his zeal for popery, he called several of his most famous divines from Spain to confute the German reformers: but their attempts were vain as endeavouring to change the course of nature. Some of them carried back the Scripture doctrines, which their evidence had compelled them to embrace, and so preached the gospel of salvation to their countrymen.

Juliano Fernando, a man of rank, obtained an edition of the Bible printed in Germany, which he conveyed to Spain for general circulation among the people. Truth, in this manner diffusing its sacred light, roused the vigilant agents of that dreadful tribunal, and the number of victims of the Inquisition was prodigious. Eight hundred are enumerated as prosecuted in a short period. Single executions would not satisfy the bigots; twenty were honoured in martyrdom in one fire!

Charles V. himself, after the abdication of his crowns, is known to have inclined to the doctrines of the reformers; though while in his prosperity he had cruelly persecuted their preachers. There is little to doubt that he died believing in

those saving truths : for many of the texts which Luther and the Protestants brought to prove the justification of a sinner by faith alone, were found written with his own hand, and stitched to the hangings and curtains of his bed. Besides, on his decease, the divines, who accompanied him in his retreat, were seized by the inquisitors. Pontius, his confessor, in whose arms he expired, was soon after thrown into prison on suspicion of heresy, and in that confinement he terminated his life. After his death he was condemned as a heretic, and his body was burnt, together with his books, which he had written against the Romish church.

Dr. Augustine Cazella, one of the chaplains of the late emperor, with thirteen others, among whom were his brother Francis, and his sister Blanche, and Herezulo, a lawyer of eminence, were burnt at the stake at Valladolid. Leonora, his mother, whose house was the place at which these reformers met for worship, died in prison. Leonora, the widow of Herezulo, after several years' imprisonment, shared the fate of her husband with the like constancy and Christian temper.

Prince Don Carlos, son of Philip, king of Spain, had witnessed some of the executions of these good men ; and manifesting an inclination for the Protestant faith, by order of his own father, he was immured in a prison, and there privately put to death, as is believed, on a charge of heresy, which the Protestant faith was then called !

The college of Isidore, in the city of Seville, was honoured to furnish a noble company of martyrs. Numbers were awokened by the preaching of Dr. Egidius, whom Charles V. had nominated bishop of Tortoza. But before his consecration to the episcopal dignity, he was imprisoned in the Inquisition. Dying in confinement, his bones were burnt as those of a heretic. John Gonsalvo, converted by the ministry of Dr. Egidius, was a zealous preacher of the gospel, for which he was condemned to the flames, and his sister with him. On the way to the place of execution, he sang part of the fifteenth Psalm ; and, exhorting his sister, he was heard to say, " Be of good courage, my dear sister, and hold fast the faith ;" on which account he was strangled. In the same city, Garcias Arias Blancao, a monk of St. Isidore, a violent persecutor, was con-

verted to the true faith of Christ, and suffered at the stake. William Roye, one of the assistants of Tindale, in making the first English translation of the Bible, and Nicholas Burton, both Englishmen, were put to death in Portugal, for their attachment to the religious principles of the reformers.

But the immortal honours of martyrdom were not limited to men: some of the noble army were furnished by women. Maria Bohongua, a young lady of singular learning and piety, by reading the Latin Bible, had acquired much of it by heart, but for which she was sacrificed at the stake: her sister Jane, sunk under the severity of her tortures, and died in prison. By such measures of cruelty, bigotry prevented the Reformation in the proud kingdom of Spain. Mosheim observes, "The Inquisition, which could not gain any footing in the kingdom of Naples, reigned triumphant in Spain; and by racks, gibbets, stakes, and other such formidable instruments of its method of persuading, soon terrified the people back into popery, and suppressed the vehement desire they had of changing a superstitious worship for a rational religion."

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND.

SECTION I.—HENRY VIII.

Lollards—Cardinal Wolsey—Henry VIII. writes against Luther—Declared Defender of the Faith—Quarrels with the Pope—Act of Parliament declares the king Head of the church of England—Lord Cromwell—Dr. Cranmer—Suppression of the monasteries—State of the nation—Cranmer made archbishop of Canterbury—Tindale translates the Bible—Its publication in England—Chained in the churches for general reading—Divine knowledge increased—Scriptures again suppressed.

THE Lollards, the followers of Wyckliffe, were far from extinct in England at the commencement of the sixteenth century. In the early part of it, the names of several were recorded who sealed their attachment to the truth of Christ by the blood of martyrdom, before Luther arose as a reformer in Germany. Dissent from the superstitions of the church of

Rome was visited with the severest penalties ; and for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, six men and a woman were brought to the stake in 1519, at Coventry, where all that was mortal of them perished.

Cardinal Wolsey was then at the height of favour with the king, being his prime minister, as well as the papal legate. Luther's writings were eagerly and extensively read in England ; to prevent which, copies of them were publicly burnt by the cardinal after a solemn and pompous procession to St. Paul's in London. This measure awakened a spirit of inquiry for them, or made the people far more eager to read them, especially after the king had become the antagonist of Luther, in 1521, by a book published in defence of the seven sacraments of the Romish church. The Pope was unbounded in his praises of the work ; and, as an acknowledgment, conferred on Henry the title which our kings at present take, "Defender of the Faith."

Strange as it may appear, the same Henry VIII., "Defender of the Faith" of the church of Rome, commenced, in a few years after, the Protestant Reformation of England ! Political motives determining the Pope to deny the king his repeated solicitation for a divorce from his queen, he threw off the papal supremacy, and assumed to himself both the title and the authority of sole head of the English church.

This new head of the church of England, however, did not reform the abuses of its constitution, nor restore the purity of Scripture doctrine. The principal alteration which he made in the constitution of the English church was, the transfer of the supremacy from the Pope to the king. The numerous antisciptural popish dignities of the clergy were still retained. The doctrines of the Reformation were allowed only in part to be published. Denying transubstantiation, and teaching even the Lord's Prayer in English, were accounted crimes, for which, and similar repeated heresies, many devout and excellent Christians were brought to the stake by means of those inhuman beings, bishops Bonner and Gardiner.

After the death of the ambitious prime minister, cardinal Wolsey, several beneficial alterations in the forms of religion

were made from time to time, under the king's direction, he being in a great degree influenced by lord Cromwell, an able and upright statesman, and Dr. Cranmer, a man of distinguished piety and zeal.

Henry's extravagancies had drained his treasury, and made him necessitous; and as the monks and friars were the greatest enemies to the claims of the king as the head of the church, and their lives being notoriously profligate and immoral, he at once suppressed all the monasteries throughout the kingdom; seizing, for the use of the state, their splendid shrines and ill-gotten revenues, to an immense amount. This procedure, with some political measures of the past reign, threw such swarms of idle vagrants about the country, subsisting by begging, or robbing and plundering all they met, whether in woods or highways, that, during the reign of this reforming king, no less than seventy-three thousand persons were capitally convicted and executed!

Cranmer, being greatly in favour, was created archbishop of Canterbury; and he prevailed with the king to sanction a translation of the Holy Scriptures, many copies of which had already been secretly circulated throughout the kingdom.

This translation of the Scriptures had been made by the learned and pious William Tindale, who retired to the Continent to accomplish that noble and benevolent work. He finished the Testament in 1526; and by the assistance of several lofty minds, the whole Bible in 1535. At the close of his important labours, being betrayed by Philip, an Englishman employed for that purpose by the papists, he triumphed in martyrdom, near Antwerp, in 1536, praying in the spirit of his Master, Christ, "Lord! open the eyes of the king of England." Tindale had been assisted by John Frith, William Roye, and John Rogers, who afterwards died martyrs, and by Miles Coverdale, the two latter of whom assisted Cranmer in preparing the new edition published in 1540. A copy of this Bible was ordered by the king to be chained, for general use, in every parish church in the kingdom, where crowds of people flocked to learn the true way of salvation, while one read for the instruction of the attentive multitude!

By this means evangelical knowledge and the power of god-

lieness evidently increased among the people; but the work of reformation rather declined in the latter years of the king's life, partly through his capricious tyranny, and partly through the bigotry of the dignified clergy, all of whom, with very few exceptions, were papists, and consequently hostile to the publication of the Scriptures. In 1543, therefore, it was enacted, "that the Bible shall not be read in English in any church. No women or artificers, apprentices, journeymen, serving-men, husbandmen, or labourers, shall read the New Testament in English. Nothing shall be taught or maintained contrary to the king's instructions. If any spiritual person shall be convicted of preaching or maintaining any thing contrary to the king's instructions, made or hereafter to be made, he shall for the first offence recant, for the second bear a faggot, and for the third be burnt!"

SECTION II.—EDWARD VI.

Piety of the king—The regents favour the Reformation—Exiles return to England—Ignorance of the clergy—Homilies prepared as a substitute for preaching—Liturgy compiled from the popish mass-book—Itinerant preachers appointed to publish the gospel at fairs—Cranmer afraid to carry the Reformation to the standard of the Scriptures—The popish prelacy and clerical orders retained in the church of England—Dissenters called Puritans—King Edward laments the imperfection of the Reformation—Still it is an incalculable blessing to the nation—Puritans—Lamentable conduct of Cranmer in persecuting—Tenderness of Edward—English reformers not all pious—Death of Edward.

EDWARD VI., in the eleventh year of his age, ascended the throne of his father, Henry VIII. According to the writers of different parties, and who knew the young king, he was the wonder of his age for talents, and learning, and solid piety. He was a decided patron of the Reformation, which was supported by his uncle, the duke of Somerset, lord protector of the king; by Cranmer; and by the greatest part of those whom Henry had left regents during the minority of Edward.

The majority of the bishops and clergy were opposed to any alteration in religion: but the government was in the hands of those who were reformers. The work of reformation was

prosecuted with vigour, under the direction of the king and council, assisted by Cranmer and a few select divines. Those who in the late reign had been imprisoned on account of religion, were released; the persecuting laws were repealed; the pious exiles returned, and learned reformers from the Continent were invited into England.

Such was the gross ignorance of the clergy throughout the kingdom, that few of them were capable of preaching or praying; twelve homilies were therefore composed for them by Cranmer, to be read instead of preaching; and for the public service of devotion, forms of prayer were prepared, which, to win the people, were translated principally from the popish mass-books then in use. By this means the reformers hoped gradually to wean the people from their old superstitions. In the mean time, some of the most eminent preachers in the universities were commissioned to itinerate, for the purpose of preaching in the churches, and in the fields at fairs, where multitudes became acquainted with the gospel of Christ to the salvation of their souls. Hugh Latimer and John Knox, the reformer of Scotland, were distinguished in this service.

The reformers, in regulating the church of England, acknowledged the Scriptures to be the only rule both of doctrine and worship; and to this standard they were generally desirous of reducing their ecclesiastical work. But they were afraid to proceed so far, especially with regard to the numerous orders of dignified clergy, and the ceremonies of public worship. Cranmer and his colleagues admitted, that only two orders of ministers in the church are sanctioned by the Scriptures, bishops or presbyters, who are pastors of single congregations, and deacons, officers chosen to manage the secular affairs of those congregations. But still the numerous clerical orders of the popish system were retained in the church of England; and, in the preface to one of the service-books, the reformers signified that they "had gone as far as they could in reforming the church, considering the times they lived in, and hoped they that came after them would, as they might, do more." It is said by a contemporary writer, "that Cranmer had drawn up a book of prayers a hundred times more perfect than that which was then in being; but the same could not take place,

for that he was matched with such a wicked clergy and con-
vocation."

King Edward, in his diary, lamented that "he could not restore the primitive discipline, because several of the bishops, some for age, some for ignorance, and some for their ill name, and some out of love to popery, were unwilling to it."

The present measure of reformation, however, was an unspeakable blessing to the nation; as by reading the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, the pure doctrine of salvation by the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ was made familiar to the people, who became intelligent converts from the delusions of popery.

In reforming religion in England, those great men who were the labourers, were not unanimous in relation to their work; several of them, Rogers and Hooper, with the king, wishing every unscriptural service and ceremony abolished. Dissenting from the rule, which was retained, of wearing the ridiculous clerical habits, some refused to wear them, as being grossly superstitious and popish. As these dissenters wished primitive purity, both in doctrine, worship, and discipline, they were denominated Puritans; and though they were generally of the number of the most learned and pious, they were doomed to suffer many inconveniences from those who insisted on perfect uniformity. Hooper refused to put on the popish habits; and this was the cause of much hard usage to himself and his non-conforming brethren, and he was committed to the Fleet prison by Cranmer and Ridley, where he lay for several months; but the affair was at length compromised, and, from his known orthodoxy and piety, Hooper was consecrated bishop of Gloucester.

The conduct of Cranmer, in some particulars, was glaringly inconsistent. He had been a papist, a Lutheran, and now was a Calvinist in doctrine, and in each change he had been guilty of inexcusable cruelty. While he was a Lutheran, he consented to the burning of John Lambert and Anne Askew, for those very doctrines for which he himself afterwards suffered. He bore hard on the papists, stretching the law to keep their most active leaders in prison; and in 1549 he was guilty of the blood of a poor frantic woman, Joan Bocher, more fit for

bedlam than a stake. When the warrant for burning this poor woman as an Anabaptist was presented to king Edward, to his eternal honour, he refused to sign it; and Cranmer had much difficulty in persuading him to compliance, arguing from the practice of the Old Testament in stoning blasphemers, which rather silenced than satisfied the young and tender-hearted monarch. And when at last he yielded, he told the archbishop, with tears in his eyes, that if he did wrong, since it was in submission to his authority, he should answer for it to God; and though Cranmer was astonished at Edward's answer, yet he suffered the sentence to be executed! From these facts, however, it is not to be inferred, that cruelty was a distinguishing characteristic of Cranmer. It is generally allowed, that he was a man of remarkable mildness and charity. Religious liberty was not understood in that age, and some of the most excellent and pious men of those times, thought it right to punish those who departed from the true faith.

But to esteem all those who embraced the reformation, as belonging to the true church of Christ, would be a serious mistake. We must be guided by our Saviour's maxim, so far as we can apply it, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Political and interested motives, without the least sense of religion, influenced many who were numbered among the clergy. Yet, at this time, there were not a few in England who were "burning and shining lights" in their day, fervent in prayer, evangelical in doctrine, laborious in the discharge of their ministry, and illustrious examples of purity in their lives. There were others, and it is believed a large majority, who, while they complied with the most powerful party, professing zeal for the doctrines of grace, dishonoured them by an unfruitful, or even by a scandalous course of living.

Edward VI. ardently desired the perfect and permanent establishment of the Reformation in England; but this talented and religious prince died of consumption, January 6, 1553, in the seventeenth year of his age. Some of his last words were, "Lord God, deliver me out of this miserable and wretched life, and take me among thy chosen; howbeit, not my will, but thine be done. Lord, I commit my spirit unto thee; yet for thy chosen's sake, send me life and health, that I may truly

serve thee. O my Lord God, bless my people, and save thine inheritance. O Lord God, save thy chosen people of England, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain thy true religion, that I and my people may praise thy holy name, for Jesus Christ his sake."

SECTION III.—MARY.

Mary a bigot papist—She adopts every measure to re-establish popery—Prisons filled with Protestants—Many flee abroad—Mary marries Philip of Spain—Persecution rages—Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, degraded—John Rogers, the first martyr of this reign—Number of martyrs—Their character—Their behaviour—Fox's "Book of Martyrs."

EDWARD was succeeded on the throne of England by his sister Mary. She was a consistent papist, and she submitted her conscience to be directed wholly by the Romish priests. Mary was a princess of the greatest superstition, bigotry, and cruelty, and a most determined and active enemy to the principles of the Reformation. Her reign was, in almost every respect, calamitous to the British nation. It exhibits a genuine picture of popery when united with ignorance and arbitrary power, and the record of it will be transmitted to posterity, characterised as the "bloody."

As by the parliament of her father, Henry VIII., it had been enacted, that the sovereign is the supreme head of the Church of England, Mary took advantage of it immediately, and published a royal order prohibiting public preaching. By the same authority the popish mass was restored; the married clergy were expelled from their livings, unless they put away their wives; and the preachers were imprisoned. Many of the reformers, aware of the gathering storm, withdrew to foreign lands, at least to the number of eight hundred; besides many hundreds of noblemen, merchants, and other persons of property, and foreign Protestants, who had settled in England.

Most of those remaining at home, who had been distinguished in the promotion of the Reformation, were soon apprehended, and the Tower was full of prisoners. Cranmer and Ridley, Latimer and Bradford, were privileged for a time

to be confined in the same room. This afforded them an opportunity mutually to support and strengthen each other in their glorious course, and their correspondence shows the reality of their spiritual consolations.

The queen, in 1554, married Philip, king of Spain, who, like herself, was a papist, and the most bigoted prince of that age. He brought into England an incredible quantity of money ; by which a parliament devoted to the court was procured. The laws against the Pope's authority in England were repealed ; and those against heresy, and for burning heretics, were revived.

All was consternation among the professors of the reformed doctrines, and the terrible effects of these alterations were fatally experienced by those who adhered to the truth and doctrines of the gospel, as contained in the Holy Scriptures.

After exposing archbishop Cranmer, and bishops Latimer and Ridley, to the most brutal scorn of the university of Oxford, to which place they were removed from the Tower, under pretence of disputing publicly concerning the peculiar points of doctrine between the Catholics and Protestants, the ruling clergy commenced the bloody work of burning the servants of Christ. As their ancestors in persecution had thought and acted, so they determined. Their policy was to cut off both root and branch of Protestantism. They weakly reasoned, as many before had ignorantly done, that the horrors of the stake would terrify the most confirmed "gospeller" into an abjuration of his faith, and to a compliance with all the rites of popery. John Rogers, who had been appointed dean of St. Paul's, a famous preacher, was made the first example of their malicious zeal. He had assisted Tindale on the continent, in the glorious work of translating the Scriptures, and now he joyfully sealed the precious doctrine of their sufficiency for salvation by the shedding of his blood. His murder in Smith-field was conducted with much formality by the sheriffs of London, in the presence of an immense crowd of people. He was denied the favour of an interview with his weeping wife and his ten children ; but they accompanied him from the prison door to the place of execution.

It cannot be exactly ascertained how many suffered martyr-

dom in this reign. No less than two hundred and seventy-seven, in different parts of the kingdom, are enumerated ; though some supposed there were four hundred, including those who died through imprisonment. Of these martyrs it is said, five were bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight gentlemen, eighty-four tradesmen, a hundred husbandmen, labourers, and servants, fifty-five women, and four children. Besides these, there were fifty-four under prosecution, seven of whom were whipped, and sixteen perished in prison : the rest were patiently waiting for their fiery translation, but were mercifully released through the queen's death !

The characters and behaviour of the martyrs, especially their evident piety, patience, and triumph in death, excited a surprising interest among the people ; and many became, by this means, far more inclined to favour the truth. Archbishop Cranmer, bishops Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper, and Rogers, Laurence, Taylor, Philpot, and Bradford, were men of great fame for learning ; they were great preachers, men of scriptural piety, and of holy lives. These, and the martyrs generally, were favoured in their sufferings with the divine consolations of the Holy Spirit ; so that they preferred enduring the most grievous torments, to making a recantation of their principles, by doing which, many of them might have obtained their liberty. Our readers, especially our young friends, ought to be well acquainted with the history and principles of these holy men of God, these noble witnesses for the truth of Christ ; because the liberty and security which we now enjoy are some of the fruits of their labours and sufferings. But for more full information on these subjects, we must refer them to the detailed accounts in the “ Book of Martyrs,” by John Fox, who lived through the reign of queen Mary : or to the works of the reformers, published by the Religious Tract Society.

SECTION IV.—ELIZABETH.

Character of Elizabeth—She restores Protestantism—State of religion in this reign—Elizabeth fond of pomp and the popish ceremonies—Puritans persecuted—Several refuse bishoprics on account of the ceremonies—Others accept them in hope of a more scriptural reformation—Court prelates—Act of uniformity—Grievous persecutions—The court clergy procure the establishment of the Star Chamber and High Commission Courts—Manner of persecution—Deprivation of many eminent clergymen—Their sufferings—Illegal courts.

MARY was succeeded in 1558 by her sister Elizabeth, a woman of extraordinary talents for government. These she employed successfully to advance her kingdom against the Pope, the French, and the king of Spain. Elizabeth was feared by all the sovereigns of Europe. She restored the Reformation, which her sister had laboured to destroy; and she afforded efficient assistance to the Protestants in Germany, France, Scotland, and the Netherlands.

Elizabeth, however, possessed no small measure of the bigotry of her father; and she exercised her power principally in supporting her royal prerogative, both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs, against all who presumed to dispute her decisions.

The state of religion in England, during the reign of Elizabeth, was far from being flourishing. On her accession to the throne the queen abolished the Pope's supremacy; though she strongly inclined to the rites, discipline, and doctrines of the Catholics. This was evident to all, and she publicly thanked one of her chaplains for preaching in defence of the real presence in the sacrament! Elizabeth always affected great magnificence, and many of the popish ceremonies were too congenial to her mind for her to allow of their abolition. Thinking that her brother had gone too far in stripping the ordinances of public worship, she could not be prevailed upon to go to the same extent of his reformation.

Popery being again overturned, the exiles hastened back from the continent, professing the utmost Christian charity towards each other: but only those who were willing to yield

their consciences to the decisions of the queen, and to comply with her semi-popish establishment, could obtain promotion, or even allowance in their ministry. The Puritans were dis-countenanced, forbidden to preach, and persecuted. Bishoprics were refused by Whitehead, Gilpin, Sampson, Miles Coverdale, the assistant of Tindale in translating the Bible, and who had been bishop of Exeter in the time of Edward, and John Knox, the reformer of Scotland, on account of the popish habits and ceremonies. Many who did accept them, did it with trembling, from the necessity of the times, indulging a vain and fruitless hope, that Elizabeth would yet be induced to amend the system. Among the latter were Parker, Grindal, Pilkington, and Sandys.

It may appear strange that the pious reformers should be persecuted in a Protestant state: yet such was the melancholy fact. They were desirous of having the affairs of religion regulated by the decisions of the Holy Scriptures, as the only law of Jesus Christ: but to this law the queen would by no means yield. Some of the newly-created bishops, though agreed in opinion with the Puritans, thought it most prudent to comply with the queen's wishes, hoping that by degrees they should be able to effect a more evangelical reformation. But the court prelates, being chiefly zealous to advance their own order, carried matters with a high hand, and within six months after the queen's accession, they procured an act of parliament to enforce perfect uniformity in all the rites and ceremonies of public worship!

This Act of Uniformity, passed early in 1559, produced grievous effects in the church throughout this reign, because it served as a legal sanction to the inhuman persecutions of some of the bishops and archbishops. These, by injunctions to their clergy, by spies and informers, unworthy the proceedings of mere politicians, much less the character of Christian ministers, brought great numbers before the "Star Chamber," and the "Court of High Commission," by whose authority they were imprisoned under pretence of disobedience to the queen's majesty, and of treating her authority with contempt.

The popish clergy generally yielded full conformity to every thing that was required of them by their superiors; but a con-

siderable number of the most learned and pious could not in conscience adopt all the ceremonies, and obey the authoritative injunctions. The London ministers first were summoned before six of the bishops, when the lay chancellor addressed them,—“ My masters, and the ministers of London, the council’s pleasure is, that strictly ye keep the unity of apparel like this man, [pointing to Mr. Cole canonically habited,] as you see him : that is, a square cap, a scholar’s gown, priest-like, a tippet, and in the church, a linen surplice : and inviolably observe the rubrick of the common Prayer, and the Queen’s Majesty’s injunctions, and the Book of Convocation. Ye that will presently subscribe, write, Volo. Those that will not subscribe, write, Nolo. Be brief; make no words.” And when some would have spoken, the answer was, “ Peace, Peace. Apparitor, call the churches. Masters, answer presently, *sub pæna contemptus*, and set your names.”

Some yielded without objection, but others would not ; and though the best preachers were among them, as acknowledged by the archbishop, they were suspended and deprived ; many of them having wives and children, were reduced to great distress ; some of them were taken as tutors to noblemen, while some again, like the persecuted apostles, continuing to preach the gospel to their people, were thrown into prison. The Protestant church of England thus became, in spirit and in practice, a correct counterpart of much in the worst operations of popery.

It appears astonishing, that any professing to be the disciples of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, having his gospel in their hands, his example before their eyes, and avowedly governed by his Word, should, in direct opposition to his precepts, become persecutors. More especially that they should be persecutors of men, whom themselves acknowledged to be pious, conscientious, and harmless ; and persecute them for a difference of opinion on mere ceremonies ! Archbishops Parker and Whitgift were cruel enemies and oppressors of the Puritans, who, from the late act, were called Nonconformists ; employing the most dishonourable methods to hunt and imprison them, by means of spies and informers ; and making new articles, contrary to the laws of the land, for their more

certain conviction on being examined. The two courts already mentioned, favoured their unfeeling bigotry. Many of the Nonconformists petitioned in vain for liberty, after lying in prison for several years; and many died through long confinement, without being brought to trial, while their families were utterly ruined. The prelates carried their tyranny to such lengths, that the ministers of the queen's council sometimes remonstrated with them on account of their proceedings, as both cruel and illegal.

"The Star Chamber," and the "Court of High Commission," should be better known to all our young readers, that they may more dearly prize our present liberties. The former was a tribunal justly characterized in our days as "infamous," consisting of certain noblemen, bishops, judges, and counsellors, of the queen's nomination, by whom cases were decided without the intervention of a jury. In the latter part of this, and the following two reigns, this court sat constantly, and was so unmerciful in its decisions and punishments, that the whole nation exclaimed against it as a mark of the vilest slavery.

The Court of High Commission was a new tribunal, erected for the purpose of discovering, as well as of punishing, the Nonconformists. Instead of producing witnesses in open court, to prove the charge alleged against a person, these ecclesiastical commissioners assumed a power of administering an oath *ex officio*, by which the prisoner was obliged to answer all questions the court should put to him, and even to accuse himself, or his dearest friend or acquaintance. If he refused to swear, he was imprisoned for contempt; and if he took the oath, he was convicted from his own confession; and the term of his imprisonment was determined, not by any law, but at the pleasure of the commissioners. Many were imprisoned for refusing to take the oath; but to give a detail of the sufferings of the more conscientious part of the clergy, as inflicted by the High Commission and diocesan courts, would require volumes!

SECTION V.—ELIZABETH (Continued.)

Review of the Articles and Liturgy—Parties—Puritan objections—Arguments of the Conformists—Nonconformists' defence—Origin of modern Independents—Clergymen ejected—Dutch Anabaptists—Two of them martyred—Appeals to the queen to spare them.

IN 1562 a convocation of the clergy was called to review the Articles of the church of England. They had been drawn up by Cranmer, and ratified by the parliament in the reign of Edward VI. They were reduced from forty-two to thirty-nine, as at present. A remarkable clause, not found in Edward's articles, was inserted in the twentieth article; but how it was added or by whom, is not known: it was a piece of policy suited to the times to insert secretly in that article, “The church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and hath authority in controversies of faith.

“The rites and ceremonies of the church came next under review, and the Puritans determined, if possible, by petition and remonstrance, to get these removed. Their petitions, though signed by a very great number of pious and learned theologians, were rejected by the convocation, after much warm discussion: the decision against them, however, was by a single proxy vote, fifty-eight being for adopting the prayer of the petitioners against the rites and ceremonies, and fifty-nine for continuing them. By so slender a majority was the question decided in favour of the present liturgy of the episcopal church, and the Nonconformists were compelled to form themselves into a separate body.”

It must be observed here, that the Nonconformists were far more cordially attached to the doctrinal parts of the articles of the church of England, than the conforming clergy, as a body: but they objected to wear the popish clerical habits;—to the church as a political corporation, being the creature of the state, by which its doctrines were defined and its ceremonies appointed;—to the power of the bishops, they being elevated to the dignity of barons and lords, claiming superiority and exercising authority over their brethren in the ministry;—to the long list of clerical orders;—to the destructive power of

the prelates in their spiritual courts ;—to kneeling at the Lord's Supper ;—and to the reading of church lessons from the Apocrypha : all of which they maintained were contradictory to the institutions of the apostles of Christ, as contained in the New Testament, and subversive of pure Christianity. They objected to the many repetitions in the forms of prayer, not adapted to the existing circumstances of the congregations ; and especially as free prayer—not the reading of forms—was the only manner of the first Christians, and still was the custom of other Protestant churches : they objected to singing the prayers, as was the custom in cathedrals, as popish, and to several expressions in the baptismal and burial services.

The ruling clergy justified their severities by pretending that the discipline of the church was not to be directed by the Scriptures, but by the writings of the primitive Fathers : that the things against which the Nonconformists objected were matters of an indifferent nature, which the queen's authority was sufficient to establish, and to which they were bound to submit as to the laws of the land.

But the Nonconformists replied, they were not matters of an indifferent nature which the queen's authority could ordain, and to which, as to the laws of the land, they were bound to yield obedience. They further contended, that the things opposed by them were contrary to the Scriptures, and that compliance would be sinning against the authority of Jesus Christ, whose word was alone binding upon them, independently of any law, or of the contradictory decisions of the fathers. They declared they would cheerfully engage to render unreserved obedience to the sovereign, in all things of a civil nature, but could not submit their consciences even to royal authority. The ruling prelates then charged the dissenters with obstinacy, deserving severe punishment : but they replied, that such a charge was not founded in truth, any more than the charge of the papists against the Protestants was true, when they rejected the popish impositions ; or of the pagans against the primitive Christians, when they were in like manner accused of obstinacy. They seriously declared, that their firmness was only a pious determination to hold sacred the inspired decisions of the Word of God.

After the ratification of the Articles, the bishops vigorously enforced subscription to them, and the liturgy, with the ceremonies of the church. In 1564, appeared the advertisements prepared by archbishop Parker with the concurrence of the other bishops, in order to secure a perfect uniformity in ecclesiastical matters.

Conformity was enforced with so much severity, that several beneficed clergymen of the diocese of London, with others of the people, determined to separate from a church which allowed them no liberty in ceremonies; that they might avoid those rites, which they believed to be antichristian and superstitious, as they were acknowledged by all to be unscriptural. Hence originated the Congregational Independents in England.

Assemblies were held by these Dissenters as Providence afforded them opportunities, in private houses; or, like the Hebrews when persecuted, "in dens or caves of the earth," in fields or woods near the metropolis. In 1567, they hired a building in the city, with the intention of having a sermon and the Lord's Supper; but they were surprised, and most of them taken by the officers, and sent to different prisons: they were continued in confinement till about two years after, when twenty-four men and seven women of that congregation were liberated by order of the council.

From 1540 to 1574, a considerable number of ministers distinguished for their learning and piety were deprived, excommunicated, or imprisoned, for refusing to subscribe to the ceremonies, and to observe them. "It is said, that in some counties nearly all the most faithful pastors were ejected; while others of grossly immoral habits, and concealed Papists, were suffered to hold their livings, because they conformed." By proclamation, the queen commanded, that "all who should be found nonconformable in the smallest matter, should be immediately apprehended and cast into prison; that all who should forbear coming to Common Prayer, and receiving the sacraments according to the said book, should be immediately presented and punished; and that all, who should use any other rites, either in private houses or in public assemblies, or who should maintain in their houses any persons guilty of these things, should be punished with the utmost severity."

The year 1575 is distinguished by a transaction, which reflects imperishable dishonour on the queen and the prelates. A congregation of Dutch Anabaptists being discovered at some place near Aldgate, twenty-seven persons were seized and committed to prison. Four recanted their opinions; and, according to the custom of popery, they were required to bear faggots on their shoulders during sermon at Paul's Cross, as a token of their having received mercy from the church, when they deserved the stake! Eight were banished; and two, who refused to recant their alleged errors, were ordered, as obstinate heretics, to suffer at the stake! On this occasion, the Dutch residents in London, who were allowed to hold their meetings for religious worship according to the national plan, interceded with the queen, and entreated her to spare their deluded countrymen. But she gave them a positive refusal to their request. John Fox, though a Nonconformist, was a favourite with the queen, on account of his *Martyrology*, and he, in Latin, made an application to her on their behalf: but though his arguments appear sufficient to convince the most perverse judgment, and his appeals to her compassion, as a woman, appear calculated to soften the hardest heart, nothing availed with the virgin queen! A clergyman of our times asks, “What are we to think of those evangelical prelates, who sat in the High Commission Court and at the council table, a part of whose office it was to advise the queen? Alas! that none could be found, who, on such an emergency, would give her correct information respecting the will of Christ, and assure her, that ‘He, the Son of Man, was not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them!’ A death-like silence reigned, and the law took its course.”

SECTION VI.—ELIZABETH (Continued.)

Archbishop Whitgift—Clergy ejected—Giles Wigginton—Independents—John Udall, Penry, Greenwood, and other Independents, martyred—Their number—Mr. Attorney Morrice—Some exiles remain at Geneva to make a new translation of the Bible—True church in England—Survey of the parishes—The queen's opinion of preaching—Piety of the Nonconformists—Some pious bishops license the nonconforming clergy as lecturers—Prophesings—Archbishop Grindal's defence of them—He prefers sermons above reading prayers and homilies.

JOHN WHITGIFT was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury in 1583, on the decease of the pious Grindal. After his elevation he published three articles for every clergyman to subscribe, declaring from his heart, his approbation of the whole Common Prayer, and the manner of ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons; and that he will use no other than the public prayers. Numbers of pious clergymen were deprived through the imposition of these articles. Accounts state that sixty-four ministers were suspended in Norfolk, sixty in Suffolk, and thirty-eight in Essex, besides those in other counties. In behalf of these, several noblemen interceded with the queen and the archbishop, testifying that they were the most faithful, laborious, and useful preachers, while the ignorant and vicious were retained. But their applications were fruitless; though Burleigh, the lord-treasurer, reminded the archbishop that these vehement proceedings resembled the policy of the Romish Inquisition, instead of the actions of ministers of Jesus Christ.

Among the numerous cases of prelatical oppression, that of Giles Wigginton, the laborious vicar of Sedburgh, in Yorkshire, may serve as an example. After having suffered many hardships in prison, for his nonconformity to the ceremonies, his health being greatly impaired, he was deprived of his "living." But having gained his liberty, and a partial renovation of his health, he visited his beloved flock, preaching to them from house to house the gospel of Christ, for which he was apprehended and imprisoned in Lancaster castle. From this place he wrote to his patron, Sir Walter Mildmay, one of the privy council, entreating his influence in procuring his release, and the

further reformation of the church. He says, “I was arrested at Burroughbridge by a pursuivant, and brought to this place, a distance of fifty miles, in this cold winter. I am here within the iron gate, in a cold room, among felons and condemned prisoners, and, in various ways, worse used than they, or recusant papists.” Three things he mentions as lying near his heart, and as indispensable to the best interests of his countrymen. First, that faithful ministers may not be silenced by the prelates. Second, that real Christians may not be brought into trouble for rejecting the inventions of men. Third, that a learned and godly minister may be appointed to every congregation.

Mr. Stubbs, a Puritan of Lincoln’s Inn, having written a book against the danger which might attend the marriage of the queen with the duke of Anjou, a popish prince, was condemned to lose his right hand as a libeller. The instant the blow was struck, he took off his hat with his other hand, and waving it in the air, cried, “God save the queen.”

On one occasion, lest the queen should yield to the Puritans, archbishop Whitgift threw himself on his knees before her majesty, and implored her to uphold the sinking church, and not suffer any alteration that would give men occasion to say, that she had maintained an error.

Notwithstanding all the terrors employed against them, and the sufferings which were endured by surprising numbers, the Nonconformists greatly increased, including most of the population who were seriously disposed.

The Independents were very numerous in 1586, when Robert Brown, a young clergyman of high family and daring character, preached their doctrines fearlessly through the country. From this man they were called Brownists.* Many

* Brown was educated at Cambridge, but became a Nonconformist about 1580; and after officiating for some time to a congregation of Dissenters at Norwich, he went to Holland, and obtained leave to found an Independent church at Middleburgh. He returned to England in 1589, again conformed, and obtained preferment in Northamptonshire, the living of a church. He was a man of turbulent passions; and, for an assault, he was committed to the county gaol, in which he died in 1630, aged eighty years, a dishonour to the Christian name.

were the martyrs among the Independents. John Udall, one of their ministers, was tried in 1591, for having published a defence of their principles, entitled, "A Demonstration of the Discipline which Christ hath prescribed in his Word for the Church, in all Times and Places, until the World's End." One of the judges telling him that his book was replete with sentiments inconsistent with established institutions, tending to the overthrow of the state, and the raising of rebellion, Udall replied, "My lords, that be far from me; for we teach that, reforming things amiss, if the prince will not consent, the weapons that subjects are to fight with, are repentance and prayers, patience and tears." The judge offered him his life if he would recant; and added, that he was now ready to pronounce sentence of death. "And I am ready to receive it," cried the magnanimous confessor; "for I protest before God, not knowing that I am to live another hour, that the cause is good, and I am contented to receive sentence, so that I may leave it to posterity how I have suffered for his cause."

Udall was condemned; but powerful friends at court obtained for him a conditional pardon, the terms of which were not adjusted before he died in prison!

Penry, Greenwood, Barrow, and Dennis, of whom the first two were clergymen, and the others laymen, were soon after tried on similar charges, and perished by the hands of the executioner. In vain a pardon was offered them on condition of recanting. Several others were hanged for dispersing the writings, and several for attending the ministry, of the Brownists.

Queen Elizabeth being informed, by Dr. Reynolds, of the calm piety which these martyrs had displayed, and how they had blessed and prayed for their persecuting sovereign, her heart was touched with remorse, and she expressed regret at having taken away their lives. But, urged forward by Whitgift, her haughty spirit soon arose to its usual elevation; and in 1593, only a few months after their martyrdom, a severer law was passed against the Puritans. Sir Walter Raleigh opposed the bill in the House of Commons; on which occasion it was, that he stated, that the number of professed Brownists alone amounted to twenty thousand in England!

Mr. Attorney Morrice, in 1592, moved in the House of

Commons, to inquire into the proceedings of the bishops, and against the ex officio oath, in which he was supported by Sir Francis Knollys, treasurer of the queen's household, and by other distinguished persons; but the queen imperiously forbade the House to meddle with ecclesiastical matters, it pertaining to her prerogative, as head of the church, to attend to those things; and she charged the speaker, on his allegiance, not to read the motions; and Morrice, for his presumption, though he is spoken of as a respectable character, was arrested; and for several years he was imprisoned in Tutbury castle.

Several of the Puritan exiles did not return, but remained at Geneva, to finish their translation of the Bible begun in the late reign. The translators were Coverdale, Goodman, Gibbs, Samson, Cole, Whittingham, and John Knox, of Scotland. They compared Tindal's old English Bible, first with the Hebrew, and then with the best modern translations; and divided the chapters into verses, which the former translators had not done. Being published at Geneva, it was denominated the Geneva Bible. It was not allowed to be used or printed in England until 1576, on the death of archbishop Parker, because, in its notes, some reflections were made upon the hierarchy of the English church. This translation, however, was chiefly used in families; and more than thirty editions of it were printed in as many years;—such was the demand for it on account of its division into verses, marginal readings, annotations, and other useful helps.

The condition of the true church of Christ in England, in the reign of Elizabeth, for the most part was truly deplorable; for the greater number of the clergy consisted of the ignorant Catholics, who conformed to all the alterations and changes of the times, but were unable to preach. Mr. Strype, a faithful historian, and himself a Churchman, gives an affecting account of it. He says, “The substantials being lost in contending for externals, the Churchmen heaped up many benefices upon themselves, and resided upon none, neglecting their cures. Among the laity, there was little devotion: the Lord's day was greatly profaned and little observed; the common prayers were not frequented; some lived without any service of God at all; many were mere heathens or atheists: the queen's court

was a harbour for atheists and epicures, and a kind of lawless place, because it stood in no parish."

Suspensions of the nonconforming ministers, when it was found they omitted any of the habits or ceremonies in performing public worship; fines and imprisonments of them for that offence continued with such rigour, that in a survey made by order of parliament in 1586, it was found there were no more than two thousand ministers, to serve nearly ten thousand parishes; and few of those ministers were capable of preaching. Many churches, even in London, were shut up for want of ministers, to the great grief of pious men, and the inexpressible pleasure of the papists, who exulted at seeing the reformers weakening their own hands, by silencing such numbers of the most useful and popular preachers, while the country was so seriously in want of them.

"It was the opinion of the queen, that learning was pernicious to the laity; and she said that two or three preachers were sufficient for a whole county." Bishop Sandys, in a sermon before the queen, told her majesty, that "many of the people, especially in the northern parts, perished for want of saving food." "Many there are," says he, "that hear not a sermon in seven years, I might safely say in seventeen—their blood will be required at somebody's hands." The bishop of Bangor declared that he had "but two preachers in all his diocese."

It might be imagined, that such a course of persecuting policy would have destroyed the Dissenters; but the spirit of nonconformity did not only exist, it very greatly increased in the nation, notwithstanding the various and grievous oppressions which its conscientious advocates endured. Among them especially the church of Christ flourished; just as it had done under all former persecutions. The Puritan ministers were, for the most part, men of sound learning, evangelical principles, and sincere piety; having a sacred regard to the Word and authority of Christ, their Lord and Master, and not dissenting from the political church out of a narrow prejudice or caprice.

It is gladly admitted, that several of the bishops were men of sincere regard to religion, and consequently of moderate

principles, far from pushing the persecuting principles of the hierarchy to an extreme. By these good men, many of the Puritan ministers were protected and licensed as lecturers, to whose ministry the people flocked in crowds, to receive the bread of life. The pious part of the bishops shielded those laborious lecturers in a great degree, though it sometimes occasioned themselves both trouble and disgrace.

In several counties and districts these ministers, together with pious Conformists, held stated social meetings for expounding the Scriptures, mutual exhortation, and spiritual conference and prayer. These exercises were denominated “prophesying;” and they tended in an eminent degree to cherish vital godliness. But though they were in perfect accordance with the conduct of pious men in every former period of the church, in its prosperity,—agreeable to the Scriptures,—and incalculably beneficial to the interests of real religion, yet several of the bishops were severely censured by their brethren, and by the court, on account of countenancing them; for they were declared, and with much truth, the means of promoting puritanism. Even the pious and moderate archbishop Grindal was not secure in his dignity, but fell into disgrace, and was suspended, for encouraging these conferences, and defending them as useful to the church of Christ.

The character of these exercises will be best learned from some extracts taken from the remonstrance of Grindal, addressed to the queen, on account of her injunctions against them, and her declarations against frequent and general preaching. She thought, and her prelatical advisers agreed with their royal mistress, that reading the common prayers, and sometimes a homily, with the observance of the appointed ceremonies, were sufficient for the people; to which the offending archbishop replies—“Surely I cannot marvel enough, how this strange opinion should enter your mind—that it should be good for the church to have few preachers. Alas! madam, is the Scripture more plain in any thing than that the gospel of Christ should be plentifully preached? If the Holy Ghost prescribeth especially, that preachers should be placed in every town, how can it then well be thought that three or four preachers may suffice for a shire? Public and continual

preaching of God's Word is the ordinary means of salvation to mankind. Some there be also that are mislikers of the godly reformation of religion now established ; wishing, indeed, that there were no preachers at all, and so, by depriving ministers, impugn religion. But God forbid, madam, that you should open your ears to any of these wicked persuasions, or any way to diminish the preaching of Christ's gospel. I continue in the same mind I was when I attended upon your majesty : the reading of homilies has its commodities, but it is nothing comparable to the office of preaching ; the godly preacher is learned in the gospel who can apply his speech to the diversity of times, places, and hearers, which cannot be done in homilies ; besides, homilies were devised by godly bishops in your brother's days, only to supply necessity by want of preachers, and are by the statute not to be preferred, but to give place to sermons where-soever they may be had, and were never thought in themselves to contain alone sufficient instruction for the church of England.

" Now for the second point, which is concerning the learned exercises and conferences amongst the ministers of the church, I have consulted with divers my brethren, the bishops, who think as I do,—a thing profitable to the church, and therefore expedient to be continued ; and I trust your majesty will think the like, when your majesty shall have been informed of the manner and order thereof. The time appointed for this exercise is once a month,—the time of this exercise is two hours,—some text of Scripture before appointed to be spoken, is interpreted in this order,—prayer and a psalm follow. Afore there were not three ministers able and meet to preach at Paul's Cross ; now thirty, forty, or fifty besides, able to instruct their own cures. I am enforced with all humility, and yet plainly, to profess, that I cannot, with safe conscience, and without the offence of the majesty of God, give mine assent to the suppressing of the said exercises ; much less can I send out any instruction for the utter and universal subversion of the same. If it be your majesty's pleasure for this, or any other cause, to remove me out of this place, I will, with all humility, yield thereunto. Remember, that in God's cause, the will of God, and not the will of any earthly creature, is to take place : it is

the antichristian voice of the Pope, Thus I will—Thus I order—My will is reason sufficient.”

The reasoning of Grindal in this remonstrance is supported by the voice of the Holy Scriptures; and his is precisely the same line of argument as that adopted by the Puritans in general. But to make the Scriptures the sole law, offends the pride of usurped power; and this, therefore, has been condemned by the priesthood in every age. It was by that our Saviour and his apostles offended the Jews, and it was by that the Protestants provoked the papists.

Whitgift succeeded Grindal as archbishop of Canterbury, as we have seen, in 1583, and continued to occupy that exalted station till his death, in 1603. He was a great favourite with queen Elizabeth, on account of his zeal for her prerogative, and perseverance in further enforcing the severe statutes against the Puritans. A learned episcopalian writer observes, “The number of deprived clergy, in consequence of the more strict conformity enforced by archbishop Whitgift, does not appear considerable. In the province of Canterbury there appeared, of Nonconformists, two doctors of divinity, two bachelors, twenty-two masters of arts, and thirteen bachelors, with ten under-graduates: in all forty-nine. But these were probably many of them men of popular abilities. They are described as welcomed into the families of the gentry, in the capacity of tutors and private chaplains: and their instructions are considered as having produced no small effects on the next generation, in the disastrous days of Charles I.”*

Whatever may be said by individuals in apology for Whitgift, his name will be transmitted to posterity as that of a lofty, intolerant Churchman, and a bitter persecutor of men who were beyond measure his superiors, some of them in solid and sacred learning, but especially in the manifestation of moral and religious virtues, essential to the character of a Christian.

* Fry's Church History, p. 511.

CHAPTER X.

SCOTLAND.

Papery in Scotland—Patrick Hamilton—Visits Germany—Becomes acquainted with Luther—Returns a reformer—Falls a victim to the bigotry of cardinal Beaton—His early death—Circulation of the Scriptures—George Wishart—His martyrdom—John Knox.

AT the commencement of the sixteenth century, papery reigned in Scotland in its most oppressive form. The priesthood possessed about half the property of the nation, and their wealth was still increasing. They had the decision of matrimonial and testamentary causes in their hands; and as they had access to every person, they suffered few to pass into eternity without leaving some rich donation to the church, to make an atonement for sin, or to procure ready access to heaven. Their share of property rendered the priesthood so powerful in Scotland, that almost every thing was under their direction; and their manners were so licentious, that they appeared to have abandoned themselves to work all iniquity with greediness. They scarcely knew or cared for any argument in support of their pernicious power, besides false miracles, the authority of the church, and the decrees of councils.

But the light of truth penetrated the darkness of Scotland. Patrick Hamilton, a kinsman of James V., king of Scotland, was induced to seek further instruction in preparing for the office of priest, at some of the universities on the Continent. Being related to the king, he was made an abbot at an early age, before he had completed his preparatory studies. On the Continent he became acquainted with Luther, by whose conversation and writings he was led to embrace the pure doctrine of the gospel from the Scriptures. He studied theology at Marpurg, under Lambert, a Lutheran professor of divinity; and on his return to Scotland, he devoted his talents to the ministry of the gospel, which he faithfully preached with much success. He circulated the various writings of the reformers, and published several tracts of his own, which show him to have been well grounded in the doctrine of Christ.

But although related to the royal family, the pious labours of Hamilton were soon terminated by the implacable fury of the popish clergy. By a consistory of bishops and abbots, with archbishop Beaton at their head, he was summoned, condemned, and burnt, on the same day, at St. Andrews, March 1, 1527 ! Though only twenty-three years of age, he was a Christian of rare piety and uncommon attainments, as appears by his theological writings published after his death.

The good seed, however, had been effectually sown. The books of the reformers, and copies of Tindal's translation of the Scriptures, were procured and circulated. "One copy of the Bible, or the New Testament, supplied several families. At the dead hour of night, while others were asleep, they assembled in one house. The sacred volume was brought from its concealment, and while one read, the rest listened with mute attention. In this way the knowledge of the Scriptures was diffused, at a period when it doth not appear that there were any public preachers of the truth in Scotland."

Several men of piety and zeal rising up, were protected by the earl of Arran. On his being appointed regent to the infant queen Mary, he consented to a translation of the Scriptures, by which means the gospel became extensively known in Scotland.

Among the reformers of eminence who were raised up in Scotland about this time, was George Wishart, a man of honourable birth, a Christian of primitive sanctity, and a preacher of apostolic diligence and zeal. He was not permitted to publish the doctrine of salvation without molestation. He was soon thrown into prison, and loaded with irons. In a manner the most unjust and brutal, he was condemned by David Beaton, archbishop of St. Andrews, and who was also a popish cardinal. He was committed to the flames at St. Andrews in 1546, the cardinal feasting his eyes with the sight from his castle window. The turbulent prelate soon after fell a victim to the revenge of several gentlemen who had suffered by his tyranny ; and his body was thrown from the same window out of which he beheld the martyrdom of Wishart, and it lay unburied for several months. Evangelical truth still continued to make effectual progress, by the circulation of the Scriptures,

and writings of the reformers; though every possible effort seemed to have been made for its prevention. Two years after the martyrdom of Wishart, his zealous colleague and friend, John Knox, began boldly to preach in Scotland, the doctrine of Christ. After various persecutions by the popish prelates, he took refuge in England, and there he was licensed to be employed as an itinerant evangelist in the northern counties, where he was eminently useful. In the reign of Mary he fled to Geneva: but, by the invitation of his friends, he returned to his native country in 1559; and by his well-earned reputation, and almost apostolical labours and authority, he was the principal agent in establishing the Reformation in Scotland, according to the Presbyterian model taught by his friend Calvin.

Knox was a man of extraordinary intrepidity, zeal, and disinterestedness; of uncommon sagacity, of sound theological knowledge, and considerable biblical learning, and eminent for his scriptural piety. His life was an illustration of his holy doctrine, in which he agreed with the rest of the reformers. Regardless, in matters of religion, of the distinctions of rank, he uttered his admonitions from the Word of God, with a vehement boldness suited to the genius of that age, and to his own peculiar, distinguished circumstances. He, as well as Luther, has been charged with unfeeling harshness; but such a statement is exceedingly erroneous, as is evident from the whole tenour of his private life, and his faithful friendships; and his letters to his wife, to his mother-in-law, and to his Christian friends, breathe the most affectionate kindness and natural tenderness of heart.

Earl Morton, regent of Scotland, attended the funeral of Knox, and pronounced his eulogium in the following short sentence: "Here lies he who never feared the face of man."

CHAPTER X.

IRELAND.

Degradation of Ireland—George Brown sent by Henry VIII. to reform Ireland—He is made archbishop of Dublin by Edward VI.—Dr. Cole's persecuting mission defeated—Church of Ireland modelled to that of England—Dublin university.

IRELAND, sunk in ignorance and degraded by superstition, was not altogether unblest by the Reformation. Its principles were made known in that country, principally by the ministry of George Brown. He was provincial of the order of Augustine monks in England ; but, having embraced the doctrines of the reformers, he laboured diligently in preaching them. Being recommended to Henry VIII., he was sent by him in 1535, as archbishop of Dublin, to abolish the Pope's supremacy in Ireland. He destroyed the popish relics and images in the cathedrals and churches, and employed his authority with considerable success, in promoting the knowledge of the gospel. By king Edward, Brown was constituted primate of all Ireland ; and by his writings and ministry, he advanced the interests of scriptural truth.

Although the Protestant interest was not great in Ireland, nor the adherents of the new doctrine numerous, Mary directed her thoughts thither, and a commission was signed by her for the extirpation of them. Dr. Cole was nominated commissioner ; but, boasting of his powers before the mayor of Chester, the inn-keeper's wife, fearing for her brother, a Dublin Protestant, took away the commission, and substituted in his box a pack of cards, which was not discovered till he reached Ireland. Covered with shame, he returned to England for a new commission ; but while waiting for a fair wind to proceed to Ireland, Queen Mary died, and the Protestants escaped. Thus Dr. Cole was again disappointed, and Elizabeth Edmonds was the instrument, under Providence, of preventing much misery in Ireland.

To render the Reformation permanent in this country, several measures were adopted. The church of England was very

early modelled to the form of doctrine, worship, and discipline established in England. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a university was founded at Dublin, furnished with learned professors from Cambridge. By these means, the doctrines of Christ were published, and unknown benefits were imparted to many of the people. The eminently learned and pious James Usher, afterwards archbishop of Armagh, was the first student of the Dublin university.

CHAPTER XI.

GREEK AND EASTERN CHURCHES.

Eastern churches in Europe, Asia, and Africa—Greek church—Correspondence of Melancthon with the patriarch of Constantinople—Miserable state of the Greek Christians under the Turks—Russia—Nestorians—Egypt—Abyssinia.

NOMINALLY, the extent of the Greek or Eastern church was still very great in the sixteenth century, including large divisions of Europe, Asia, and Africa. That society of professed Christians living in communion with the patriarch of Constantinople, is properly the Greek church, though it assumes the title of the Eastern church. The jurisdiction of this prelate is divided, as in early ages, into four large provinces, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem; over each of which presides a bishop with the title of patriarch, nominated or approved by the patriarch of Constantinople, who himself is indebted for his elevation to the Turkish vizier, and obtains that honour frequently by means of large bribes.

Our plan will not allow us to notice all the countries and provinces over which these prelates have authority, especially as their religion consisted chiefly in forms and superstitious ceremonies. The Holy Scriptures, and the decrees of the first seven general councils, are acknowledged as the rule of their faith; though few even of the clergy possessed any part of the sacred books, and the people were not allowed to interpret the standard writings for themselves. A confession of their faith, in Greek and Latin, was published in 1643, from which

it appears that they differ widely both from the Romish church and from the Protestant doctrine.

Early in the Reformation, Melanethon sent a Greek translation of the Augsбурgh Confession to the patriarch of Constantinople, in the hope that the beauty of divine truth would gain his heart: but the proud prelate did not deign to send a reply. Similar attempts were made with the succeeding patriarch, but with little better success. He did indeed send several letters in correspondence, written in a spirit of benevolent cordiality, but discovering an inviolable attachment to ancient opinions and institutions.

After their subjection to the Turkish emperors, their condition was most deplorable. Learning and science were almost extinguished among them: for they had no college or literary institutions. The seeds of knowledge and virtue, therefore, were very scantily sown; and the few who surpassed their ignorant brethren in intellectual acquirements, were such as derived their advantages from the schools of Sicily or Italy, where the studious Greeks usually repaired for education. Under the Mohammedan government, the clergy were subjected to extreme contempt and oppression: but their ignorance and corruption of manners were exceeded only by the same characteristics of the people. Tenacious only of their senseless ceremonies of religion, they were utterly strangers to the pure doctrines of the gospel, and to the vital power of Christianity.

Russia, at the present chief member of the Greek church, yields no obedience to the patriarch of Constantinople: but that branch was almost entirely destitute of the Scriptures, and sunk in ignorance, barbarism, and superstition.

The Nestorians still subsisted both in Asia and Africa, under their independent patriarchs, as did the Armenians, among whom it is believed there was some degree of true piety to be found.

Egypt and Abyssinia still included many of these branches of the Eastern church; but as few of them possessed any part of the Holy Scriptures, and their religion consisted chiefly of ceremonies, examples of genuine, intelligent piety, it is believed, were exceedingly rare, and eminent reformers among them are unknown.

CHAPTER XIII.

ROMISH CHURCH.

Missionary institution—Missions to South America—Their pernicious influence—Missions to India, Ceylon—Japan—China—Their successes—Ignatius Loyola founds the Jesuits—Council of Trent—Its decisions.

OBSERVING their spiritual domination declining in Europe, the Roman Pontiff's directed their views to the pagan nations, especially to the countries conquered by the Spaniards and Portuguese. Papal Bulls being treated with contempt, by so many princes, a new system of policy was adopted for the management of its interests. Separate “congregations,” or committees, were formed for the purpose of transacting, with the deepest policy, the various business of the Romish court. Zealous missionaries were sent into the enslaved nations of South America, where millions of the wretched inhabitants were forced into the profession of the papal superstitions, and to worship the crucifix, with the images of the Virgin Mary, and numerous saints. In this work of conversion, barbarous laws and inhuman tortures were employed under the direction of the Inquisition, by all which several provinces were depopulated. It has been computed, that during the reign of Charles V., that is, from 1516 to 1558, the papal system of intolerance sacrificed, in South America, about forty millions of the wretched heathen, by various oppressive measures, many thousands of whom by public executions as heretics !

Francis Xavier, with many others, sailed about 1542 for India, and laboured with amazing zeal and considerable success in the Portuguese settlements on the coast, in Ceylon, and in other islands. In 1549 he sailed for Japan, where vast multitudes embraced the profession of Christianity. There he laid the foundation of a church, which was tolerated about sixty years, and about thirty more it continued under the heathen persecution. At one time, it is reported, there were six hundred thousand Christians in Japan.

In 1552 he sailed for China; but died within sight of the land.

The colleagues of Xavier, the chief of whom was Matthew Ricci, persevered, and, by their medical and mathematical skill, they gained a great degree of influence with the nobles, and even with the emperor. They gained over many to the profession of Christianity; but in their converts nothing more was required than for them to be sprinkled with holy water in their baptism, and to add to their former idol that of the Virgin, or some other saint. Missionaries of this class maintained a footing in China for nearly two centuries; though at length they were prohibited on account of their wicked politics.

Ignatius Loyola, an assistant of Xavier, having read the fabulous lives of the saints, projected and formed the singular society of Jesuits. They were so called from assuming the name of Jesus. They were devoted by a solemn oath to the absolute service of the popish hierarchy, and to oppose all its enemies. By their learning, zeal, and address, avowedly tolerating and complying with the vices of the great, they soon spread into every country, and added a measure of vigour and power to the declining papacy. But their doctrines so pernicious, and their intrigues so diabolical, becoming evident in every kingdom, rendered it indispensable for the safety of government to banish them, even from Catholic countries, as the common enemies of society. The church of Rome, therefore, in this century, gained but little permanent advantage by every possible effort. And as to their foreign missionaries, it is feared, they have done more injury than service to the cause of pure Christianity.

Former Popes had determinately resisted every application for the calling of a general council. It had been demanded for the purpose of inquiring into the ecclesiastical grievances of which every nation complained, and also to settle the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church. As the Protestants had so prodigiously increased, Pope Paul III. yielded to necessity, and summoned a council, which assembled at Trent in 1545, and continued, by twenty-five sessions, till the year 1593, under Julius III. and Pius IV., in order to correct, illustrate, and fix with perspicuity, the doctrine of the church, to restore the vigour of its discipline, and to reform the lives of its ministers.

The decrees of this council, together with the creed of Pope Pius IV., contain a summary of the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church. These decrees were subscribed by four legates, two other cardinals, three patriarchs, twenty-five archbishops, one hundred and sixty-eight bishops, besides fifty-three inferior clergy, in all two hundred and fifty-five. Of these, France and Spain furnished forty, and a few came from Austria, Poland, and Hungary, and one hundred and fifty were Italians: of course, the council was entirely under the influence of the Pope.

Though we cannot specify all the decisions of this celebrated council, for the sake of our young readers, it may be necessary to mention some of its extravagant and anti-scriptural enactments. They decreed, "that ecclesiastical traditions are the standard of faith and manners, equally with the Holy Scriptures; that the apocryphal additions to the books of Esther and Daniel, and the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and two first books of the Maccabees, are canonical Scripture; that the Vulgate Latin Bible should be sustained as the only authentic one, at least of the Latin translation; that the Scriptures ought to be interpreted only according as the church understands them, and agreeably to the unanimous explication of the Fathers; that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are transubstantiated into Christ's body and blood, on the priest pronouncing the words of benediction; that the laity ought to partake only of the bread; and that priests have power to forgive sins!"

CHAPTER XIV.

REVIEW OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Divine providence—Scriptural religion—Excellency of the gospel—Protestant nations—Popish nations—Two divisions of Protestants—Many of them retain some popish rites—Pope Pius IV, and Gregory XIII. offer to Elizabeth to ratify the English Liturgy—The reformers great promoters of learning—Acknowledge each other as brethren—The court prelates of England begin to deny the ordination of foreign clergymen—Dr. Bancroft first publishes the divine right of prelatrical bishops—Zeal for this false doctrine causes much persecution—Spanish Armada.

By the astonishing events of the sixteenth century, we are loudly called upon to contemplate a Divine providence; and to behold the demonstrations of the truth and divinity of genuine Christianity. They at once declare and illustrate the beneficial influence of pure scriptural religion and sound learning, both upon individuals and nations, in opposition to ignorance and superstition; and they exhibit, most powerfully, by the noblest examples of human character, “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.” On the one hand, they teach us the dreadful enmity of the human heart against “the things of the Spirit of God,” and its bitter hostility to rational and Christian liberty. On the other hand, they serve to strengthen our assurance in that inspired prediction which declares, “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

“Thus stood the account, at last, between Protestants and papists in Europe,—Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Brandenburg, Prussia, England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, all Protestant governments. Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Belgic provinces, under the Spanish yoke, all papal. Germany, with its vast dependencies divided, and nearly poised in interest between both, every state having a mixture of its opponents; in some tolerated, in others persecuted. Switzerland divided, but the preponderating weight, and greater numbers, Protestant: and France, more than once on the equilibrium, ready to change its dominant religion; and at last returning to the house of bondage, though with millions of its inhabitants firm in the Protestant faith.”

"The numbers were still on the side of the Catholics ; and their union under one visible head, greatly in their favour, politically speaking ; whilst the Protestants quickly separated into two great bodies, besides other subdivisions, at the heads of which were Luther and Melanethon on the one hand, of the Augsburg Confession ; and on the other, of the Helvetic Confession, were Oecolampadius and Calvin. These also were pretty nearly balanced. In the north, Lutheranism generally prevailed. Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and the far largest part of the German empire followed the Augsburg Confession ; whilst the British islands, Holland, Switzerland, Geneva, France, and many states of Germany, adopted the confession of faith which hath since obtained the name of the Reformed, or Calvinistic."*

The form of worship in the reformed churches was not uniform in every point. Most of them retained the observance of some superstitious seasons and rites. The Episcopalianists of England and Ireland were peculiarly inclined to the Romish forms. This form of worship was so similar to the Roman, that Pope Pius IV. and Gregory XIII. offered to Elizabeth to ratify it, if she would but acknowledge herself and her kingdom to be his spiritual subjects. While the Episcopalianists retain the popish custom of kneeling at the Lord's table, the French Protestants stand ; and the other reformed sit, as Christ and his disciples did. In government, the Episcopalianists almost entirely resemble the papists ; only the king sustains the place of his Holiness. In all the reformed churches, the Presbyterian government and discipline were adopted ; but most of the foreigners, especially the Swiss, allowed the magistrates so much power, that the exercise of discipline was too often either stopped, or rendered ineffectual. The Scotch mode of worship, and form of discipline and government, are more pure and scriptural than that of Geneva itself, which was a kind of pattern to the rest.

"Almost all the reformed doctors of note were zealous promoters of learning. The knowledge of languages was cultivated to such a degree, that Buchanan, Calvin, Beza, and others,

* Dr. Hawies.

wrote Latin equal to that of the Augustan age. Zuinglius, Bullinger, Ecolampadius, Musculus, but especially Mercer, Calvin, Beza, Junius, and others, published commentaries on the Scriptures, of considerable merit. Zuinglius wrote a kind of theological system, concerning "true and false religion." But Calvin's "Institutions," so oft revised by himself, held the same place among the reformed as Melanthon's "Common-places" did among the Lutherans. The various confessions of the reformed churches in Switzerland, France, England, Scotland, Holland, with the Palatinate Catechism, and others, may also be considered as abbreviated systems."*

At the commencement of the Reformation, and while the life of religion prevailed, except in a few instances, the reformers generally held fraternal fellowship and frequent correspondence. But the courtly clergy of the church of England soon began to refuse to acknowledge several of the foreign communions as sister churches, and to deny the validity of their ministerial ordination. The English clergy were induced thus to reflect upon the foreign Protestants, because they, being Presbyterians, held the same opinions on ecclesiastical government as the Puritans; disallowing, as popish and unscriptural, the lordly dignity assumed by modern bishops.

This arrogant spirit was cherished, especially by the ruling clergy at court; and it was defended by the ambitious Dr. Bancroft, chaplain to archbishop Whitgift, and one of his principal agents in persecuting the Nonconformists. This divine, in a sermon at the cross, in St. Paul's-church-yard, in 1588, affirmed, that the bishops were a superior order in the church, above ordinary pastors, and that their elevation was of divine appointment. His was a doctrine in direct contradiction to the unanimous judgment of the reformers. It was still disallowed by the most learned and pious in the church of England; but cordially welcomed by those who, to subserve their worldly policy, were interested in its being embraced by the nation. Even the archbishop himself, the determined enemy of the Puritans, had not the courage to receive it, and to declare that it was scriptural; saying, "he rather wished, than believed it true."

* Brown.

It was zeal for this false doctrine, as one of the principal supports of arbitrary power, that occasioned, for a hundred years from its publication by Bancroft, the greatest part of the calamities in England and Scotland, and the grievous sufferings which were endured by the Nonconformists. But under the wise and powerful providence of God, even this series of oppression by intolerant bigotry, contributed to the colonizing of a “new world;” and America appears designed to give lessons to every nation in the profession and influences of pure, scriptural religion.

There is another event of the sixteenth century worthy of special record in a history of the church: that event is the attempted invasion of England by the Spanish Armada, in 1588, for the extirpation of the reformed religion. After immense preparations, during three years, by the powerful Philip, king of Spain, this whole armament being ready, it was consecrated by the Pope, and pronounced by him “ Invincible.” The fleet consisted of one hundred and thirty large ships, and thirty smaller ones; furnished with eight thousand sailors, and twenty thousand soldiers! They were bringing innumerable instruments, prepared by the direction of the Inquisition, for torturing the heretics of Britain. By the providence of God, not a Spanish foot was suffered to step upon our shore! This vast armament was almost annihilated; partly by the bravery of our seamen, and partly by the fury of the opposing elements. Many of the ships were captured by the British, and some of the instruments of torture were deposited in the Tower of London; where they are still to be seen, as evidences of the superstitious barbarity of the Romish religion!

BOOK SIXTH.

CENTURY XVII.

INTRODUCTION.—Scriptural knowledge and pure religion progressively increased during the seventeenth century; but they did not advance with the rapidity of their diffusion at the commencement of the Reformation. In some instances the reformed religion was overpowered by its enemies; in others, it declined from its former purity by the worldliness of its ministers; but it still continued to gain ground, and in some places to shine, even in the midst of fiery trials and of deep afflictions.

CHAPTER I.—LUTHERAN CHURCHES.

GERMANY, SWEDEN, DENMARK.

Lukewarm state of religion in the Lutheran churches—Difference between Luther and Calvin on the Lord's Supper—Several converts to popery made by the Jesuits—Labours of John Dury—Revival of religion at the close of the century—John Arndt—Dr. Spener—Professor Frank—Pietists.

THE condition of the church, among the Protestants in Germany and the neighbouring states, was not that of remarkable prosperity at this period. Evangelical piety seriously declined in Germany towards the close of the sixteenth century; and at the commencement of the seventeenth it had not much revived. Luther, throughout his ministry, had differed in opinion from Zuinglius and Calvin, on the subject of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Luther held the doctrine of consubstantiation, which is, that Christ is really present, united with the bread and wine in some mysterious manner. Zuinglius and Calvin rejected that sentiment, holding, that the Supper is only a memorial of the Saviour's death. The original difference was still cherished; and, neglecting the plain and momentous doctrines of salvation, the Lutheran notion of the Lord's Supper became, with learned but irreli-

gious Protestant leaders, the subject of much uncharitable controversy, to the serious injury of vital godliness.

By the unwearied policy of the Jesuits, several persons of distinction among the Protestants were led to embrace the Romish system of religion ; and vigorous attempts were made by the Pope, the emperor, and his Catholic allies, utterly to destroy the Reformation. The profession of the reformed religion was, however, powerfully defended by the devoted Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, who led the armies of the Protestant princes to victory over their united enemies.

The differences between the Lutherans and Calvinists were contemplated, by many excellent Christians, with painful regret ; and several men of eminent piety and learning laboured to promote a permanent union and fraternal intercourse among all Protestants. The most distinguished of these worthy persons was John Dury, a Calvinist, a native of Scotland. He zealously persevered in his pacific endeavours, during a period of forty years ; but without all the measure of success which his benevolent mind desired. There were others, who effectually promoted the revival of experimental godliness by their diligent ministry and their evangelical writings ; bringing forward young preachers of solid piety, establishing frequent social meetings for religious conference, prayer, and exposition of the Scriptures. They extensively diffused the essential doctrines of the gospel, insisting on the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and justification by faith in the atonement of Christ, with the manifestation of its fruits, in a pious disposition and a holy life. There appeared at the head of this class of useful men, John Arndt, at the beginning of the century ; Dr. Spener, in the middle ; and professor Frank, with his colleagues, Schadius and Antonius, at the close. Their piety and zeal, like as it has been the case with all such from the time of the apostles to our days, were rewarded with misrepresentation, reproach, and ridicule, by their irreligious or lukewarm contemporaries. As they enforced the indispensable necessity of pious affections and holy habits, they were denominated “Pietists ;” but their works of faith, and labours of love, are recorded with admiring gratitude by the church on earth ; and, to their everlasting honour, in the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER II.—CALVINISTIC OR REFORMED CHURCHES.

FRANCE.

Religion declines—Protestants deprived of their fortified towns—Louis XIV. revokes the Edict of Nantz—Terrible destruction of the Protestants—Multitudes escape to foreign countries—Waldenses persecuted—Their published memorial—Renewed persecutions—Ambassadors of several nations intercede for them with the duke of Savoy—Cromwell's government remonstrates—Marquis Pionessa—Persecutions.

THE Edict of Nantz having secured liberty to the Protestants of France, genuine piety flourished in some of their churches. Many of their pastors were men of eminent learning, orthodoxy, and personal religion; by which they were prepared to endure affliction for the sake of Christ, as well as to rejoice in his salvation. Not a few, however, were men of little acquaintance with experimental godliness. The distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, therefore, as held by the reformers, were slighted, or even denied; and a political, worldly spirit was their distinguishing characteristic. The governors of the fortified towns, which the Calvinists were allowed to hold for their security, observing the sleepless malice of the crafty Jesuits, became active in taking measures for their own preservation. This vigilant precaution was magnified by their enemies, and represented as dangerous to the state; on which pretext cruel persecutions and destructive wars were carried on against them, and the barbarities of the sixteenth century were renewed against these Dissenters in France.

They were also characterized by an equal degree of perfidy. The atrocious cruelties exercised upon them, are supposed to have been to an equal or even to a greater extent. In the former part of the century, under the direction of cardinal Richlieu, prime minister of Louis XIII., a man of great talents, but an enemy to the reformers worthy of popery, the cautionary towns were taken from the Calvinists. One shameful invasion of their rights succeeded another during the adminis-

tration of the cardinal : the most inhuman laws, which the blind rage of bigotry could frame, and the most oppressive measures which ingenious malice could devise, were employed to destroy these conscientious dissenters from idolatrous superstition, or to bring them by force under the papal yoke.

After the death of cardinal Richlieu, the popish bishops, together with the Jesuits, had the principal influence in the cabinet of Louis XIV., and their characteristic zeal rather increased against the Calvinists. Finding their unwearied political intrigues insufficient, they prevailed on the king in 1685, contrary to the most solemn obligations which human or divine laws can frame, to revoke the “Irrevocable Edict of Nantz.”

The consequences of the revocation of this celebrated Edict, corresponded to the wickedness of the act itself.

It was intended, by one grand effort, to extirpate the very remembrance of the Protestant profession in France. For this purpose, troops of soldiers were commissioned to accomplish by fire and sword this bloody work, which they proceeded to execute with every species of unheard-of brutality. Mr. Claude informs us, that they bound some before great fires, and let them go when they were half roasted ! They hanged others with ropes under their arms, and plunged them repeatedly into wells of water to drown them ! They bound mothers that gave suck to posts, and laid their helpless infants before them, languishing for days and nights, to perish in their sight ! Amid hideous cries and blasphemies, they suspended men and women, stripped of their clothes, some by their hair, and others by their feet, and suffocated them with burning hay ! After other indignities, they stuck the bodies with pins and needles from head to foot ; and others, being naked, they rolled along the floors, covered with pieces of broken glass. Many, endeavouring to escape these horrid torments, were pursued by the soldiers into the fields and woods, where they were shot like beasts of prey ! These scenes of freezing horror were witnessed by many of the popish clergy, who beheld them with sportive laughter and fiend-like exultation.

By these dreadful proceedings Calvinism was not indeed wholly exterminated in France, but the true church was

reduced exceedingly low. The preachers and professors had fifteen days allowed them to leave the kingdom; in which time many, eminent for piety and learning, fled and found asylums in Protestant countries. Eight hundred thousand, who were artisans, escaped from the persecutions; many of whom, settling in Spitalfields, London, and in the county of York, contributed greatly by their factories to the wealth and prosperity of England. Those who remained in France declined much from the purity of the gospel, endeavouring to accommodate their religious exercises to the popular customs, to avoid the fury of their unrelenting persecutors. The good seed, however, still sprung up, bearing some fruit to the honour and praise of God. The Waldenses in Piedmont, in like manner, suffered in these calamities of their neighbours in France.

These humble but pious dissenters were exposed almost incessantly to the fury of their papal persecutors. Their sorrows were renewed with the century; and in 1601, many hundreds of families were forcibly driven from their native valleys, to seek a peaceful place of refuge. Their memorial published on this occasion, states as follows: "To the end, therefore, that all men may know that it is not for any crime of misdemeanour, perpetrated against the person of our prince, or for rebellion, or opposition to his edicts, or for murder, or theft, that we are thus persecuted and spoiled of our goods; we protest and declare that the doctrine maintained by the reformed churches of France, Switzerland, Germany, Geneva, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and other kingdoms, is the only Christian doctrine approved of by God, and which brings salvation to men. We are, therefore, determined to adhere to it to the end of our lives, and at the risk of every thing that is dear to us."

They were still persecuted, notwithstanding this declaration; and the most shocking calamities of this people were endured in a general massacre, in April, 1655. By the instigation and contrivance of the Romish clergy, five or six regiments of French soldiers were quartered in the valleys, and six thousand troops were placed in ambush, besides an accompanying multitude of private plunderers. Language would fail to describe the terrible havoc and dreadful carnage, which were carried on

to such an extent, that the groans of the sufferers reached the Swiss, the Dutch, and the English, whose governments became the persevering intercessors on their behalf with the duke of Savoy. The compassionate liberality of the lord protector Cromwell, expressed in a donation from his own purse of ten thousand pounds, engaged his secretary, Milton the poet, to interest himself on behalf of these persecuted people; and an appeal being made to the sympathy of the English nation, in a few days the sum was increased to thirty-seven thousand and ninety-seven pounds, seven shillings, and three pence! This contribution was intrusted to commissioners for the relief of the suffering survivors, and such generous interference produced apologies, to the several governments, for the inhuman proceedings.

The marquis Pionessa, chief actor in this dreadful work, laid the blame of it to the commanding officers, as having exceeded their orders; against which one of the captains, who, being disgusted with such engagements, gave up his commission, and published an affidavit signed by some other officers, declaring that the soldiers were commanded to give no quarter; and he says, “I was witness to many acts of violence and extreme cruelties, exercised by the banditti and soldiers of Piedmont upon all sorts of persons, of every age, sex, and condition, whom I myself saw massacred, dismembered, hung up, &c., and numerous other atrocities committed.” Nor was this the last of their fiery afflictions. In 1686, and again in 1696, similar persecutions were endured by the survivors, by which the pious Christians of the valleys became almost extinct.*

* History of the Waldenses, by Rev. W. Jones.

CHAPTER III.

UNITED PROVINCES.

Calvinism adopted by the States—Religious liberty—Baptists—Grotius and Barneveldt—Arminian controversy—Synod of Dort—Arminians object to the synod—Their principles condemned—Their ministers deprived—They find an asylum in Holstein—They are recalled by prince Henry—Vital religion—Cocceius—Witsius—Ainsworth—Claude—Mennonite Baptists.

UNDER the sanction of the States, the church of the United Provinces embraced the reformed or Calvinistic system of Christianity. But religious liberty was enjoyed in this country, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, in a greater degree than in any other nation; and other denominations of Christians were allowed, in comparative peace, to observe their religious peculiarities. Hence the Baptists became numerous in this country, and their churches flourished greatly in real piety.

Without all question, there were very many living by faith, and walking with God, who in due time translated them, mature in holiness, to his kingdom of glory; though the principal accounts which we have of the affairs respecting Christianity, in this country, relate to the disputes concerning its doctrines.

These controversies commenced at the close of the last century, when James Arminius relinquished the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, as defined by some of its professors; and on his appointment to the divinity professorship at Leyden university, in 1602, he published his new opinions, and revived some of the old Pelagian errors. His colleague in the university, Gomarus, and others, opposed his views; by which two parties were formed. On his decease, in 1609, Episcopius succeeded Arminius in the professorship, and became the head of the new party, which was patronized by Barneveldt and Grotius, chief men among the republican party in the state. By this means Arminianism became connected with the popular disputes in politics with which Holland at that period was agitated.

No theological system was agreed upon by the Arminian leaders; some of them inclining to Socinianism, and other latitudinarian principles. In this they acted according to the project of their founder, which was, to have a universal communion, without subscription to any creed, or making any declaration of faith. By this the Calvinists were led to suppose that their real object was, the total subversion of the Protestant faith, as generally held by the reformers. Repeated efforts were made by the magistrates to effect a pacification between the parties, offering to tolerate the Arminians, provided they would formally renounce Socinianism. This they refused; and, after many fruitless conferences, the Calvinists prevailed upon the States General to call a synod of divines, from the several Protestant nations, to examine and pronounce judgment upon the points of faith which were called into dispute by the Arminians.

This synod met at Dort in 1618, and consisted of learned deputies from the churches in England, Scotland, Switzerland, Bremen, Hessia, and the Palatinate; besides the most eminent divines of the United Provinces. The Arminians being condemned by them as innovators in the church, their writers represented the acts of this assembly as most tyrannical and unjust; but the pious bishop Hall, one of the English deputies, and Mr. Hales, another of our countrymen, an eye-witness of the proceedings, speak of them in opposite and in the most honourable terms.

How far the conduct of that venerable body may deserve approbation or censure, will, perhaps, best appear from a statement of its mode of prosecuting the business brought before them. The assembly proceeded in their deliberations by making, in the presence of each other, a solemn appeal to Almighty God, that they would seek his glory in the matters to be brought before them.

The Arminian leaders appearing before the synod, they were desired to make a statement of their own creed, together with the Scripture texts and the reasons upon which it was founded; inasmuch as they had rejected some of the doctrines of the Reformation. This they perseveringly refused; and, exclaiming against the constitution of the synod, as having no

authority to decide upon the question, they insisted upon being allowed to begin with a refutation of the doctrine of reprobation, as held by some of the extreme Calvinistic doctors. On no account could this extraordinary proceeding be permitted; and, after a variety of means, employed in vain by the synod and its president, to induce the Arminians to make a declaration of their belief, as at first proposed, they were excluded from the assembly. Their writings being afterwards examined, they were pronounced erroneous, and their authors declared to be corrupters of the doctrine of Scripture.

In accordance with the spirit of that age, few having correct notions of Christian liberty, after the decision of the synod, the Arminians were excommunicated, their ministers were deprived of their pastoral office, and their assemblies for public worship were suppressed; on which account many were driven from their country. This procedure was certainly unjust, and contrary to the peaceful and tolerant principles of Christianity; but the penalties and sufferings of the Arminians were aggravated, through the politics of their republican patrons, Barneveldt and Grotius, who, on account of their opposition to prince Maurice, were apprehended and imprisoned.

They were accused as conspirators against the government of their country, and charged with being employed by the emissaries of France and Spain. On conviction, Barneveldt was beheaded, and Grotius was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, from which, however, he was delivered by the ingenious contrivance of his wife.

The Arminian emigrants were welcomed by prince Frederick of Holstein, where they built a town called Frederickstadt, a monument to the dishonour of their persecutors.

Henry, the successor of Maurice, recalled the Arminians in 1625, and abolished their penalties. Their principles being tolerated, learning flourished among them; but they generally inclined to latitudinarian sentiments, bordering on the views of Socinians in their theology. None of their professors were celebrated for the vigour of their personal godliness; nor was their ministry distinguished for the scriptural conversion of men to God, neither were their congregations noted for

evincing spirituality of mind, and devotedness to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Vital religion, however, was far from being extinct in the Netherlands; though we can find but little evidence of any extensive genuine piety, except in particular instances. John Cocceius was a man of great learning and sincere piety; and though he held some peculiar opinions, especially in relation to the whole of the Old Testament history having a spiritual application to Christ and his church, his ministry was eminently useful. Cocceius was professor of Theology at Franeker and Leyden, and died in 1669.

Herman Witsius was another still more eminent professor of divinity at Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden; a man of the most exalted piety. He died in the year 1708, leaving several invaluable works to testify his profound learning and moral worth.

The ministry of Henry Ainsworth, a very learned English Nonconformist, of the Independent denomination, was much honoured of God at Amsterdam. He was one of the greatest Hebrew scholars of that age.

John Claude, an eminent French Protestant, with many other of his persecuted brethren, took refuge at the Hague, where his labours were greatly blessed: he died in the year 1687, when his son Isaac succeeded him in his ministry, and published his useful writings.

The power of godliness was extensively enjoyed and promoted by a large body of the Mennonites, who flourished greatly. The discipline of this people was extremely rigid at first, by which a division among them was occasioned. The strict were called Flamingians; the moderate were denominated Waterlandians. To heal this breach, a conference was called at Amsterdam, in 1630, and attended by the elders of the various churches in Flanders, Germany, and Friesland. In this assembly it was agreed, that each congregation should be at liberty to retain its own peculiar customs, while they entered into a bond of fraternal communion. This association was renewed in 1649, and confirmed by new resolutions, by which brotherly love was cherished, and the power of religion was considerably promoted among them.

At the close of the seventeenth century, the Mennonites were calculated to amount to about thirty thousand, in about one hundred and thirty churches in the Netherlands.

CHAPTER IV.

ENGLAND.

CHURCH OF CHRIST UNDER SEVERAL SOVEREIGNS TILL WILLIAM III.

SECTION I.—JAMES I.

James brought up in the national church of Scotland—He had repeatedly condemned the rites of the English church—James's character—Testimony of Bishop Burnet—Expectations of different parties—Petition from a thousand Puritan clergymen—James sacrifices his former principles by the flattery of the bishops—Hampton-court conference—Ill treatment of the Puritans—Nothing conceded—Dean Barlow—The Puritans threatened, excommunicated, persecuted, flee to Holland—Dr. Ames—Ainsworth—Canne—Robinson—Violence of Bishop Bancroft—Some holy bishops—Abbot—Hall—Davenant—Book of Sports—Archbishop Abbot opposes the royal order—Gunpowder plot—New translation of the Bible—North America colonized by the persecuted Dissenters.

EXCEEDINGLY calamitous was the condition of the church of Christ in England, during the greater part of the seventeenth century. Under the Stuart princes, those who were distinguished for serious godliness were grievously distressed with vexatious persecutions and ruinous oppressions, until "the glorious Revolution" of 1688, when, on the expulsion of the unprincipled James II., William, prince of Orange, ascended the throne of Great Britain. This magnanimous prince was the preserver of our liberties as a nation, both civil and religious. By his wise decisions, and his intelligent firmness, the demon of prelatical tyranny was chained; and immediately on his accession, he procured the abolition of the persecuting laws of former reigns, and granted full protection and religious freedom to pious men of all denominations. These long-sought blessings, after a vast expenditure of liberty, property, and life, on the part of the Puritan Nonconformists, were secured by the Act of Toleration.

As the throne of Great Britain was filled by several sovereigns during this century, it will be necessary to take a review of each period in succession.

SECTION II.—JAMES I. (Continued.)

ELIZABETH, dying in 1602, was succeeded by James VI. of Scotland, as the next heir to the throne. This prince had been brought up to regard with veneration the principles of the national church of Scotland ; whose constitution, forms of worship, and public ministry, are altogether different to those of the church of England. In his own country, James had avowed, in public, his enlightened conviction of the scriptural purity of his religious principles ; at the same time censuring the forms and constitution of the church of England, as unscriptural and popish ; and several times did he intercede with queen Elizabeth on behalf of the persecuted Puritans, whose principles were generally those of the national church of Scotland.

While in his native country, James appeared sober and chaste, and acquired a considerable share of learning ; but when he ascended the throne of England, the excessive flattery of the bishops and high ecclesiastical dignitaries so intoxicated his vain mind, that he abandoned the religious principles which he had boasted of possessing, and addicted himself to luxury and pleasure, and every kind of licentiousness in his manners. By this means, true religion was seriously hindered, countenance was afforded to immorality, and the nation was lamentably degraded.

That James I. merits such a character, we have no better testimony for any fact in British history. From among many others, we may adduce the authority of bishop Burnet, who cannot be suspected of bearing false witness against him, or of giving a too unfavourable colour to it by misrepresentation. He calls James I. “the scorn of the age, a mere pedant, without true judgment, courage, or steadiness, his reign being a continued course of mean practices.”

Corresponding to this character, the most unworthy mea-

sures were adopted on the subject of religion, at the accession of this Scottish monarch. It was well known to all parties, that the king, while in Scotland, had publicly declared his disapprobation of the English church, and his convictions that it was both unscriptural and popish. Being solicitous to conciliate the favourable regards of their new sovereign, the papists, Episcopalian, and Puritans, sent him addresses, professing their sincere loyalty and ready obedience. In relation to this matter, a church historian remarks, “Amidst all their hopes, each side had their fears; while James himself had, properly speaking, no other religion than what flowed from a principle which he called ‘Kingcraft.’” The papists reminded him that his parents were of the Romish communion. The bishops in their excessive flattery, declared, and the weak sovereign readily believed it as certain truth, that monarchy itself could be safe only as the present hierarchy was supported; and they slanderously represented the Puritans as factious and seditious, aiming at the subversion of the government, in both church and state. The Puritan ministers, so considerable was their body, to the number of more than a thousand, petitioned the king for relief against absolute conformity to the church service, and from various grievances of which they complained; especially that exorbitant power of the bishops which they employed in their oppressive courts.

Nothing beneficial was effected by this petition of the thousand Puritan clergy. The insinuating representations of the bishops prevailed upon the king to sacrifice all his former principles: so that within nine months from the time of his leaving Scotland, he had been induced to adopt, and express it as his determined maxim, “No bishop, no king.” By the direction of the courtly clergy, his majesty had determined before upon his plan of proceeding with regard to the Puritans; yet, to make a show of moderation and candour, in breaking off from his old connexions in the church of Scotland, he appointed a conference to be held at Hampton Court.

On the part of the church constitution, there were eighteen dignitaries, nine of whom were bishops: and for the Puritans, only four ministers, besides Patrick Calloway of Perth, all nominated by the king. Three days the pretended conference

lasted ; but it was conducted in a manner most dishonourable to the king and the prelatical party.

The chief causes of complaint being contained in “the petition of a thousand hands,” the king and the dignitaries by themselves held a consultation the first day. The bishops, on their knees, entreated that no alterations might be made in the church service, lest the Puritans, who had been deprived of their livings, and severely punished for their nonconformity, should reproach them with cruelty, in having formerly maintained what they now acknowledged to be erroneous. On the second day the Puritan ministers were called in to state their objections. The king presided, but they were not allowed to proceed with any moderate degree of freedom of speech. They were frequently interrupted, insulted, and ridiculed, by some of the prelates, as well as borne down by the frowns of majesty ; and even by the threatenings of the king, in the presence of the privy council and a crowd of courtiers.

When they were beginning to discuss the subject of rites and ceremonies, his majesty would not suffer them to proceed. Influenced by the bishops, and by his own kingcraft, he peremptorily declared to them, “ I will have one doctrine, one religion, in substance and ceremony, in all my dominions ; so speak no more of that point to me.” He closed his speeches to the Puritans’ arguments with his new, but favourite adage, “ No bishop, no king.” On Dr. Reynolds expressing the wishes of his colleagues, that liberty might be granted to the clergy to hold the meetings for their religious improvement, called “ prophesyings,” as in archbishop Grindal’s time, the king refused permission, declaring, with great warmth and vehemence, “ they were aiming at a Scottish presbytery, which,” said he, “ agrees with monarchy as well as God and the devil.”

His majesty, not suffering his own decisions to be questioned, nor objections to be proposed, terminated the second day’s conference, by addressing the defeated Puritans in a threatening as repugnant to reason as it was unworthy of a king. “ If this be all your party hath to say,” said he, “ I will make them conform themselves, or else I will harrie them out of the land, or else do worse, only hang them, that’s all.”

Another consultation was held with the bishops on the third day, and afterwards the Puritans were called in to hear the few alterations that his majesty thought proper to make in the book of Common Prayer, he again menacing them if they should fail to yield a full conformity.

Thus ended the second day's conference, in which the poor Puritans were brow-beaten by the royal disputant; insulted, ridiculed, and derided, without either wit or good manners. The wily bishops and courtiers flattered the learning and wisdom of this pedantic sovereign beyond measure, calling him the modern Solomon. Bancroft fell upon his knees, and said, "I protest my heart melteth for joy, that Almighty God, of his singular mercy, has given us such a king as since Christ's time hath not been." Chancellor Egerton said, "He had never seen the king and priest so fully united as in him."

On the third day's conference, when the king approved of the oath ex officio, compelling all the Puritans to accuse themselves, Whitgift was so transported with joy, that he said, "Undoubtedly, your majesty speaks by the special assistance of God's Spirit;" and when the Puritans again fell on their knees, humbly praying that the surplice and the cross might not be urged upon godly, conscientious ministers, James sternly replied, "We have been at the trouble to pass a resolution for uniformity, and you will undo all, by preferring the credit of a few private men to the peace of the church. This is the Scots' way; but I will have none of this arguing; therefore let them conform, and that quickly too, or they shall hear of it. The bishops will give them some time; but if any are of an obstinate and refractory spirit, I will compel them to conform." The Puritans could hope for no mercy after this stern declaration of the royal dictator, who, in the first session of parliament, affirmed, that the Papists were better than they; that the church of Rome was his mother church, though somewhat defiled; that he could meet it half way; but, as for the Puritans, they were insufferable in any well-regulated state."

Dean Barlow published an account of this conference, of which, as partial and dishonourable, the Puritans complained; and of this injury the dean himself is said to have seriously repented on his death-bed. It has been remarked concerning

this account, by a judicious historian, that “if Dr. Barlow has not represented the arguments of the Puritans in as just a light, nor related what was done by the ministers as advantageously as truth required, he has abundantly made it up to them, by showing, that the bishops, their adversaries, were gross flatterers, and had no regard to their sacred characters; and that their mortal foe, James, had but a low understanding, and was undeserving the rank he assumed in the republic of learning.”

James kept in mind the threatening declarations against the Nonconformists, and acted according to them; for the very next month, on making a few alterations in the Book of Common Prayer, without any act of parliament, he issued a proclamation, requiring immediate and full conformity. The direction of public affairs was principally influenced by the new archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Bancroft, with a few of the dignified clergy; and they, on every hand, grievously harassed the Puritans, who were excommunicated according to the new canons.

The severities of the High Commission Court were now so greatly aggravated, in persecuting the objects of prelatical dislike, as to induce even the parliament to vote that court “a most intolerable grievance,” and to petition the king on behalf of the Puritans, who were bitterly suffering under its terrors. But the king having bishop Bancroft, and men of a similar spirit, for his chief counsellors, the petition was disregarded by his majesty; and to show his displeasure with the parliament for their interference, he dissolved the House, and took the fatal resolution to govern without them in future.

“ This shocking abuse of church power obliged many learned men, ministers and their followers, to leave the kingdom, and retire to Holland, where they found refuge among their Presbyterian brethren, and enjoyed full liberty of conscience in that wise and enlightened republic; and erected congregations, some upon the Independent plan, and some upon the Presbyterian. The famous Dr. Ames, the adversary of Bellarmine and the Arminians, settled with the English church at the Hague. The learned Mr. Parker, author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, retired to Amsterdam. Mr. Forbes, a Scotch divine,

settled with the English church at Rotterdam, as many others did in different parts of the United Provinces. But the greatest number of those who left their native land were of the Brownists, or rigid Separatists. Among these was the celebrated Mr. Henry Ainsworth, famous for his knowledge of oriental literature and Jewish antiquities ; and who published a most elaborate commentary upon the five books of Moses. He died in Holland, and was succeeded in his pastoral charge by Mr. Canne, author of the marginal references to the Bible. The famous Mr. Robinson, who at first was a rigid Brownist, but by conversing with Dr. Ames, and other learned men, became more moderate in his sentiments, was the father of the Congregationalists, or Independents. Mr. Jacob, who embraced Mr. Robinson's sentiments while in Holland, transplanted them into his own native country in 1616, and founded the first congregational community in England."

Bancroft drew up the canons of the church of England ; they breathed his violent spirit, and expressed his determined hatred to nonconformity. Both clergy and laity, who dissented from their requisitions in complying with the ceremonies, were excommunicated. This sentence was understood to exclude them from the congregation of the faithful ; it rendered them incapable of suing for their lawful debts ; it doomed them to imprisonment for life, or until they made satisfaction to the church ; and, when they died, it denied them the privilege of Christian burial !

Our readers will doubtless exclaim, " How shocking this policy ! How unlike the spirit of our Saviour and his apostles ! How contrary to every thing contained in the Christian Scriptures ! It cannot be surprising that pious men should seek a refuge in foreign lands ! "

Puritanism, however, was not extirpated by all this zeal and cruelty ; it rather increased, while prelatical intolerance was rejected by the nation with abhorrence. But it ought to be recorded, that there were but few of the bishops who could fully co-operate with the violent Bancroft. Some of them, being men of distinguished talents and eminent piety, rather checked such measures by their Christian moderation. Among these holy men were those excellent prelates, Abbot,

Hall, and Davenant, who secretly countenanced the Puritan clergy, as being the most truly orthodox in doctrine, and the greatest promoters of genuine godliness, both by their ministry and their imperishable writings. The court clergy sunk into contempt, by their opposition to the liberties of the nation, persuading the king to govern without parliaments,—by their defection from sound doctrine,—by their near approximation to popery, and by their profanation of the Lord's-day, by means of the “Book of Sports.”

This execrable production was a declaration, drawn up in obedience to the king, by bishop Moreton, in 1618. It recommended that, after divine service on Sundays, those who came to church twice on the Lord's-day should “recreate themselves, by dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, may-games, whitsun-ales, morice-dances, may-pole-dancing, and other sports of a like kind.” The Declaration was ordered to be read in all the churches in England; but Abbot, now elevated to the dignity of archbishop of Canterbury, and some of the pious conforming clergy, would by no means yield compliance with the royal order, so opposed to the principles of the gospel, and so pernicious to the interests of vital godliness.

This unwise and injurious measure was intended to answer two purposes; one was, to check the progress of Puritanism, which was remarkably distinguished by a pious regard to the Lord's-day; the other was, to conciliate the papists, by silencing their objections against what they called “the rigid strictness of the reformed religion.”

Truth requires that we record the names of the last two who suffered martyrdom at the stake in England.—Edward Wightman, of Burton-upon-Trent, was convicted before the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, Dr. Neile, and burnt at Lichfield, April 11, 1612. He was a Baptist; but of his peculiar opinions we know nothing certain. Bartholomew Legate, of Essex, was condemned to the fire as a heretic, and burnt in Smithfield, March 18, 1617. He also was a Baptist.* But the constancy of the sufferers moving compassion in the spectators, it was judged better to allow others to linger out a miserable life in Newgate.

* Ivamy's History of the Baptists, Vol. I., p. 123, 124.

There are three other events, of the reign of James I., which demand particular remembrance. First, the iniquitous contrivance called “Gunpowder Plot,” in 1605. It was the work of the papists, designed for the extirpation of the reformed religion in this country: but their horrid purpose was mercifully defeated by a watchful and gracious Providence. The second important event is, the completion of a new translation of the Scriptures, which is the version now in common use in England. This good work was undertaken at the suggestion of the Puritans, in the Hampton Court Conference, and was executed by some of the most eminent divines in the nation. The third memorable event was, the commencement of Protestant missions, in 1620, by the Congregational Dissenters; who began, at that time, their emigration to New England. But further information, on this most instructive subject, shall be given to our readers when treating of religion in America.

The account of this period shall be closed with the remarks of a foreign ecclesiastical historian, by which the character of king James I., as given by bishop Burnet, will be confirmed; and our readers will be prepared to anticipate the various disorders and miseries of the succeeding reign. The learned Dr. Mosheim, says, “In the year 1625 died James I., the bitterest enemy of the doctrine and discipline of the Puritans, to which he had been in his youth most warmly attached; the most ardent friend of the Arminians, in whose ruin and condemnation in Holland, he had been singularly instrumental; and the most zealous defender of episcopal government, against which he had more than once expressed himself in the strongest terms. He left the constitution of England, both ecclesiastical and civil, in a very unsettled and fluctuating state, languishing under intestine disorders of various kinds.”

SECTION II.—CHARLES I.

Character of Charles I.—He marries a popish princess—Character of the ruling clergy—Pious archbishop Abbot suspended—Bishop Laud—Laud introduces new ceremonies—Promotes Arminianism—Suppresses all lectures supported by voluntary subscriptions—Supports the Star Chamber and High Commission—Persecutions—Sufferings of Prynne, Dr. Bastwick, Dr. Burton, and Dr. Leighton—Laud's diary record—Spirit of Laud—Abbot, Hall, and Davenant, encourage the lectures of the Puritan clergy—Charles, influenced by Laud, rules without parliament, and attempts to force episcopacy on the Scotch—Grievances of the nation—Scotland rises up against the impositions of the king—Parliament demanded—Charles forced to yield—Long Parliament releases all imprisoned for religion—Abolition of the Star Chamber and High Commission—Moderate men made bishops—Protest and confinement of the bishops—Scandalous ministers in the church—Disputes increase between the king and parliament—War commences—Charles refuses the wise counsel of Usher, Hall, and Taylor—Increase of Nonconformists—Presbyterians—Independents—Baptists.

CHARLES I. succeeded his father, James I., on the British throne. In his reign, the church of Christ in England was in a worse condition than in the days of his father. But to learn, with tolerable accuracy, the state of religion in this reign, it is necessary to consider the character of the sovereign, and that also of the ruling clergy.

Charles I. has been commended, by intelligent writers, as naturally of a mild disposition, temperate, sober, and regular in his devotions; but his character as a king is rated, by the most judicious, exceedingly low. He was unhappily educated in all his father's lofty and intolerant notions respecting both church and state; and he seemed to look upon all, except a few favourites, as a race of inferior beings, created for the purpose of doing homage to their sovereigns.

Bishop Burnet says, “He affected, in his behaviour, the solemn gravity of the court of Spain, which was sullen even to moroseness. He loved high and rough measures, but had neither the skill to conduct them, nor height of genius to manage them. His whole reign, both in peace and war, was a continued series of errors. He was out of measure set upon following his humour, but unreasonably feeble to those whom he trusted, chiefly to the queen and to his clergy.”

But his marriage with a popish princess from France, was

regarded as his greatest misfortune. The queen was a bigot to her religious principles; and her conscience was directed by her confessor, a Catholic bishop, assisted by the Pope's nuncio, with a numerous train of priests and Jesuits. Bishop Kennet observes, "The king's match with this lady was a greater judgment to the nation than the plague which then raged in the land; for, considering the malignity of the popish religion, the imperiousness of the French government, the influence of a stately queen over an affectionate husband, and the share she must needs have in the education of her children, till thirteen years of age, it was then easy to foresee, it might prove fatal to our English prince and people, and lay in a vengeance to future generations."

The character of the ruling clergy deserves particular consideration. Though the pious and moderate Dr. Abbot was archbishop of Canterbury for eight years after the accession of Charles I., his influence was very inconsiderable at court, he being but little skilled in political intrigue. His unaffected piety was most offensive to the unprincipled and licentious courtiers; and refusing to license a political sermon, whose principles he regarded as both unchristian and unconstitutional, at the instigation of his avowed enemy, the abandoned duke of Buckingham, the king's prime minister, with Dr. Laud, he was suspended from his archiepiscopal office. Iniquitous men persecuted him, as they had his worthy predecessor, Dr. Grindal.

Dr. Laud was one of the king's chaplains, and at this time exercised an almost unlimited control in ecclesiastical affairs. In 1628, he was made bishop of London; and, on Abbot's decease, succeeded him as archbishop of Canterbury.

Laud distinguished himself by introducing new ceremonies into the public services of the church, so as to make it correspond with the popish ritual. All the rites of popery were restored as nearly as possible according to the Romish Missal. Nor were the innovations confined to ceremonies. Many doctrines were taught by Laud and the court clergy, utterly at variance with the principles of the Reformation. They declared that the church of Rome was a true church, and the Pope the chief bishop in Christendom; that images in churches

were lawful, and that there was a real presence of Christ in the eucharist ; that transubstantiation was harmless, being merely a scholastic nicety ; that confession to a priest, with priestly absolution, was proper ; and that there was merit before God in the good works of men.

All the pious part of the divines, whether Conformist or Nonconformist, from the time of the Reformation, had been Calvinistic in doctrine : but Laud bitterly persecuted those who held the principles of the Thirty-nine Articles of the church ; and even the venerable bishop Davenant, for preaching upon the doctrine of the seventeenth article, was frowned upon and disgraced at court.

By the influence of Laud, even in 1629, all the lecturers at the different churches were suppressed by a royal edict, though supported by the voluntary contributions of the people ; for their instructions were generally too scriptural for his popish policy, and too favourable to puritanism. Besides, many of them were in fact Nonconformists, and sincerely beloved by the people, who profited greatly by their evangelical labours.

Laud was an active patron and a vigorous supporter of the arbitrary courts of High Commission and the Star Chamber, in prosecuting the Nonconformists, however orthodox, as they might be found deviating from his injunctions.

Such measures as were pursued by these courts, oppressing great numbers of the worthiest men in the nation, called forth expressions of general indignation, especially from the Scotch presbyterian clergy, who published several tracts against prelacy. In these they showed not only the unscriptural character of the ruling episcopacy, but exposed the various cruelties of the lordly bishops.

Mr. Prynne, a barrister of Lincoln's Inn, was brought before the Star Chamber, for a book written against stage plays, masquerades, and dances ; and, notwithstanding a learned and argumentative vindication of his book, set up by his counsel, he was sentenced to have his book burnt by the common hangman, to be put from the bar, and to be for ever incapable of exercising his profession ; to be turned out of the society at Lincoln's Inn, to be degraded at Oxford, to stand in the pillory at Westminster and Cheapside, to lose both his ears,—

one in each place,—to pay a fine of 5000l., and to be perpetually imprisoned !

Dr. Bastwick, an English physician at Colchester, for publishing a book denying the divine right of bishops above Presbyterian ministers, was also fined 1000l., discarded from his profession, excommunicated, and imprisoned.

Dr. Burton shared the same fate, for publishing two sermons against Laud's innovations in the ceremonies of religion.

Colonel Lillburne, for refusing to answer all interrogatories that might be put to him, was fined 5000l., and whipped through the streets, from the Fleet prison to the pillory, before Westminster-hall gate. When he was in the pillory, he exclaimed against the tyranny of the bishops; upon which he was ordered to be gagged, and laid in irons for life in the Fleet prison!

The shocking punishment inflicted upon Dr. Leighton has been referred to, even by modern clergymen, especially by Mr. Stretch, in his " Beauties of Sentiment," as a striking example of cruelty; and it will illustrate the spirit of those infamous courts, while it will remain on record an imperishable stigma upon the unfeeling character of archbishop Laud.

This learned Presbyterian clergyman, indignant at the intolerance of Laud and his episcopal colleagues, in their courts, published a book entitled, " An Appeal to the Parliament, or Zion's Plea against Prelacy." For this he was soon apprehended, and brought before the Star Chamber, where he was sentenced to be imprisoned for life, after suffering various dreadful punishments. While the sentence was being pronounced, the inhuman bigot Laud pulled off his hat, and gave God thanks for the decision of the court !

The illegal sentence was executed upon Dr. Leighton; and archbishop Laud, as it was afterwards found among his papers, recorded, with evident satisfaction of mind, in his diary as follows :—" Nov. 6, 1. He was severely whipped before he was put in the pillory. 2. Being set in the pillory, he had one of his ears cut off. 3. One side of his nose slit. 4. Branded on the cheek with a red hot iron with the letters S. S. On that day sevennight, his sores upon his back, ear, nose, and face, being not yet cured, he was whipped again at the pillory in Cheapside, and had the remainder of his sentence executed

upon him, by cutting off the other ear, slitting the other side of his nose, and branding the other cheek."

Probably the diary of no other man, in any age or nation, ever contained such a record with approbation; and it will be thought, by every person of reason and feeling, that the man who could make such memoranda in his private journal with satisfaction, must be a monster, capable of any act of brutality.

Apologists, even in our times, have been found, among the advocates of the hierarchy, for such barbarous cruelties, and the inhuman spirit of Laud; and Leighton has been represented as a man of a bitter spirit: but what language could be used, sufficiently strong, to reprobate the conduct of such oppressors, and their intolerance illegally exercised, and in the name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace?

Numerous writers in our times, even among Churchmen, employ language equally severe with that of Dr. Leighton, against the antichristian character of our prelates, who are yet far superior to archbishop Laud in temper; and their writings are not regarded as criminal: but, thanks to a merciful and gracious Providence, we live in happier days; and the laws of England will not allow intolerant priests to persecute by a Star Chamber.

That true religion suffered grievously under rulers of such a disposition, none can doubt. But under the countenance of the excellent archbishop Abbot, and the pious bishops Hall, Davenant, and some other prelates of a like Christian spirit, many of the nonconforming clergy laboured with great success; so that not a few truly pious people were to be found in different parts of the country. Yet the good which these holy men attempted to effect, was seriously counteracted by a large majority of intolerant, irreligious dignitaries; who, by means of the illegal courts, unfeelingly persecuted those as Puritans who were distinguished by uniform godliness. With such proceedings, and in promoting profaneness by means of the "Book of Sports," the prelates drew upon themselves the abhorrence of the sober part of the nation.

The state of things at this period will be better conceived from the testimony of Baxter, who says, "I cannot forget that in my youth, when we lost the labours of some of our con-

formable godly teachers for not reading publicly the Book of Sports, and dancing on the Lord's-day, one of my father's own tenants was the town piper, hired by the year for many years together, and the place of the dancing assembly was not a hundred yards from our door. We could not, on the Lord's-day, either read a chapter, or pray, or sing a psalm, or catechise, or instruct a servant, but with the noise of the pipe and tabor, and the shoutings in the street continually in our ears. Even among a tractable people we were the common scorn of all the rabble in the streets, and called Puritans, Precisions, and hypocrites, because we rather choose to read the Scriptures, than to do as they did ; though there was no savour of nonconformity in our family. And when the people, by the book, were allowed to play and dance out of public service time, they could so hardly break off their sports, that many a time the reader was fain to stay till the piper and players would give over. Sometimes the morris-dancers would come into the church in all their linen, and scarfs, and antic dresses, with morris-bells jingling at their legs ; and as soon as common prayer was read, did haste out presently to their play again.”*

To our history, it seems indispensably necessary to take a brief survey of those steps by which those revolutions were effected. We must look back upon the past reign, in which we perceive that the extravagant flattery of the court prelates so inflated James I., as to lead him to set himself above all law ; and, being taught by them, that it was sedition to dispute his right to take the money of his subjects, without the intervention of a parliament, he determined to govern independently of that body.

Charles I., adhering to the arbitrary principles of his father, and, like him, having bishops for his principal counsellors, was also persuaded to rule in a despotic manner without parliaments. By the furious bigotry of Laud, in attempting to overthrow the church of Scotland, supported by the king at the head of a very large army, and in the numerous oppressive measures of the illegal courts, the nation was roused to assert its rights,

* Baxter's Works, Vol. XIII., p. 444.

and to demand the assembling of a parliament, as the only effectual means for removing the intolerable evils, in church and state, under which the people groaned.

The king was compelled to yield to the wishes of the nation, and to assemble a parliament under the following circumstances :—

Charles, having resolved upon establishing episcopacy in Scotland, set up Courts of High Commission in the principal towns of that country, to punish all who should make any opposition to his will. As a nation, the Scots rose up against his unlawful proceedings, and determined on preserving their national church and their liberties, at the expense even of their lives and fortunes. Their army struck intimidation into the king's mind ; and, uniting with the English in their demand, Charles was compelled to accede to the constitutional measure, and at length he summoned a parliament.

This assembly was composed principally of moderate Churchmen, but who were fully acquainted with the intolerable evils arising from the prelatical tyranny ; and they entered upon their duties with a fixed determination to remove the grievances of the nation. From the sitting of this parliament for more than ten years, it was called “The Long Parliament.”

Being assembled for business, the parliament proceeded vigorously in their work. They immediately entered upon reforming those courts whose practices were of an illegal nature : they abolished the Courts of High Commission and Star Chamber ; and, on his petitioning the House, they liberated Dr. Leighton. The reading of his petition, describing a series of sufferings perhaps unparalleled in English history, affected many in the House to tears ; and when he was released, the venerable man could neither walk, nor see, nor hear ! The parliament allowed him a pension till his death, four years afterwards, in 1644, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. All others, who had been imprisoned on account of religion, were released ; and Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, were met several miles out of London, and conducted in triumph into the city by an immense multitude.

“ Williams, bishop of Lincoln,” as a clergyman observes,

"who had been exposed to most unjust and severe persecution under the tyranny of Laud, and was then confined in the Tower, was made archbishop of York. Hall, whose piety and learning all parties acknowledged, was translated to Norwich. Archbishop Usher, driven from Ireland by the rebellion, had a seat given him on the English bench. The last two of these prelates defended the episcopal government with great ability, but with that temper, and with a disposition to yield so much respecting the limits of the bishop's power, in order to reduce the English hierarchy more to the model of episcopacy in the primitive ages, that the moderate of all parties would probably have been satisfied."

But "the court bishops," expecting support from the crown, would yield nothing: on which account crowds surrounded the House of Lords, threatening the prelates with personal violence. Archbishop Williams then sent for his brethren, advising them to absent themselves from parliament, and prevailed upon eleven to sign a petition for protection from violence, and a protest against the validity of all acts which might be passed during their absence! They were, therefore, charged with a measure of treason, and voted to confinement in the Tower.

Encouraged by addresses from all parts of the country, they proceeded to impeach archbishop Laud, and Wentworth the earl of Stafford; who, being condemned as the chief authors of all the disorders in the kingdom, were beheaded.

Numerous petitions were presented to the parliament respecting the deplorable condition of the church of England, as it regarded the clergy; and it appearing, on inquiry, that not a few of those who had held the office of the Christian ministry were grossly immoral in their lives, and extremely ignorant of religious truths, such were dismissed from their office by the authority of parliament, and a portion of their church revenues allowed for their subsistence. As a remedy, a committee was appointed, consisting of thirty persons, called "Triers," to examine the qualifications of candidates for the sacred office, and to fill the vacant benefices with suitable persons. By this means many of the Nonconformists were promoted, and the

pulpits were filled with a larger number of learned, wise, and holy pastors, than at any former or subsequent period of our national history.

To detail all the changes of this unhappy reign, is no part of our design: it must therefore be briefly remarked, that the king, with the prelates, opposing the parliament in every possible manner, the parties became increasingly incensed against each other, till a civil war commenced between them, which terminated in the abolition of episcopacy and monarchy, the dreadful crime of regicide, and the formation of a Commonwealth. While, however, it is common to represent Dissenters as the authors of the death of Charles I., we deem it only justice to record here, that while only two ministers, Dr. Gauden and Dr. Hammond, of the church of England, remonstrated against the king's trial, more than the eight hundred Dissenting ministers in the country, and sixty in London, besides the Presbyterians of Ireland and Scotland, opposed it by petition and protestation!*

What was the state of religion in these troublous times, may be readily supposed. The king persisting to encourage Sunday wakes and diversions, under the sanction of his royal declaration, which accompanied the Book of Sports, and by which the Lord's-day was awfully profaned, those attached to his interests were, with some few honourable exceptions, generally remarkable for their licentiousness of manners, by which his lamentable fate was greatly accelerated. Attached to the person and interests of the sovereign, were several prelates of eminent learning, piety, and moderation; particularly Hall, Taylor, and the Irish archbishop Usher, who escaped from the rebellion in his native country; and if the king could have taken their advice, he would have been a better man, a happier monarch, while their Christian counsels would have blessed the nation: but their holy and evangelical labours were of little influence, compared with the overwhelming evils of an opposite class.

* We cannot but recommend to our readers, for satisfaction on this part of our history, Godwin's History of the Commonwealth, 4 Vols.—Vaughan's Memorials of the Stuart Dynasty, 2 Vols.—Owen's Life and Times, 1 Vol. by Orme; and Neale's History of the Puritans, 5 Vols.

On the contrary, the adherents to the parliament, in their measures of reformation, were as much distinguished for their sobriety, and for the observance of the forms of religion. Notwithstanding their grievous persecutions, and the emigration of many thousands during the administration of Laud, the Puritans had considerably increased under several denominations, among whom were to be found many, both of the clergy and laity, possessing the rarest talents, learning, and piety.

Of these several denominations of the Puritans, the Presbyterians, whose principles were in accordance with the national church of Scotland, formed the most numerous class; and they became the ruling party in the parliament. The first modern Presbyterian church known in England, was formed in 1572, at Wandsworth, near London. Next in importance were the Independents; but now the Baptists began to be distinguished from them, though they had been before included under that denomination, holding the same principles of Christianity with the other two, but differing merely on the subject and mode of baptism.

Some further account of the Independents will, on many accounts, be necessary to our young readers, as they have ever since made so distinguished a figure in England, including some of the most learned and laborious divines with which the church of God has ever been blessed.

The Independents arose with the Reformation, affirming, with the nineteenth article of the church of England, that "the visible church is a congregation of faithful men, in which the Word of God is faithfully preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance." They declared, that every congregation of believers is properly a Christian church, according to the institutions of the New Testament; and that it is in no respect subject to the Pope, a prelate, or a king, in matters of religion: the institutions of Jesus Christ alone, as contained in the Scriptures, being binding upon Christians. Disallowing all responsibility to any human tribunal, in respect to spiritual affairs, they were called Independents, as already mentioned. After the martyrdom of Udall, in the last century, the first modern Independent

church, in England, was formed in 1607, of general Baptists : the first modern Independent church admitting children to baptism, was formed in 1616 ; and the first Particular Baptist church was formed in 1633 : but their meetings were held in private, on account of the spies of the Star Chamber, and High Commission Courts.

During the Commonwealth, these denominations rapidly increased, including many persons of the greatest eminence for learning and piety, and whose imperishable writings remain to testify their literary and religious excellence.

As the religious principles of the Independents disallowed all connexion with human politics, and as they laid no claim to an alliance with the civil power for their establishment, Cromwell promoted several learned ministers of this denomination to be his chaplains, and encouraged that section of Christians, as an admirable and necessary check to the power of the Presbyterians : so that they increased to more than a hundred congregations, besides about fifty congregations of Baptists in England, and twenty more in Wales.

SECTION III.—COMMONWEALTH.

Misrepresentation of this age—Religious toleration—Unprecedented regard to religion and circulation of the Scriptures—Drs. Goodwin, Owen, Manton, Bates, &c.—Character of Cromwell—Quakers—Assembly of divines.

FEW things, in the history of our country, have been more grievously mistaken and misrepresented, than the state of religion in England during the Commonwealth. By writers of infidel principles, and those of an irreligious character, this has been denounced, and characterized as the “age of ignorance, fanaticism, and hypocrisy.” We readily admit, that the annals of that period are disfigured with many disgusting statements of the hypocrisy, fanaticism, and religious cant, of the military and political chiefs, who usurped the superior authority : still it will be easy to prove, that religion, sincerity, and learning, were cherished in the highest degree during the interregnum.

Episcopacy having been abolished by the parliament, and Presbyterianism adopted in its stead, the ruling clergy still required uniformity; and, in imitation of their prelatical brethren, were disposed to persecute those who dissented from them: but Cromwell, the lord protector, who had both witnessed and experienced the intolerance of the former reign, procured a full toleration to all professing Christianity, and afforded the amplest encouragement to religion, morality, and learning. However that age may have been ridiculed by the profane despisers of the gospel, there are numerous circumstances which clearly indicate, not only a better state of things than is commonly imagined, but an extensive prevalence of scriptural knowledge and genuine piety. The statutes which enforced the strict observance of the Lord's-day—the legal prohibition of theatrical exhibitions—the unprecedented circulation of the Scriptures—the vigorous efforts made to propagate Christianity in Wales, Ireland, and among the American Indians—the publication of learned theological works, replete with evangelical doctrine and practical piety—and the veneration which the people cherished for a large number of pious, learned, sober-minded, and laborious ministers, among whom were Drs. Goodwin, Owen, Manton, and Bates; and Messrs. Flavel, Charnock, Poole, Howe, and Baxter, whose talents have never been surpassed by the ministers of Christ in any age, and whose imperishable writings still constitute an invaluable treasure, enriching the church of Christ—all these facts, besides the number of great men who were educated by the teachers of this generation, demonstrate that sound learning prevailed, and that the purest religion exerted a preponderating influence over the national character.

The testimony of Baxter, who fully agreed in church government with no party, deserves our consideration. He says, “I do not believe that ever England had so able and faithful a ministry since it was a nation, as it hath at this day; and I fear that few nations on earth, if any, have the like. The change is so great within these twelve years, that it is one of the greatest joys that ever I had in this world to behold it. O, how many congregations are now plainly and frequently taught that lived then in great obscurity! How many able, faithful men are there now in

a county in comparison of what were then! How graciously hath God prospered the studies of many young men that were little children in the beginning of the late troubles, so that they now cloud the most of their seniors! How many miles would I have gone, twenty years ago and less, to have heard one of those ancient, reverend divines, whose congregations are now grown thin, and their parts esteemed mean by reason of their juniors! I hope I shall rejoice in God, while I have a being, for the common change in other parts that I have lived to see; that so many hundred faithful men are so hard at work for the saving of souls. I know there are some whose parts I reverence, who, being in point of government of another mind from them, will be offended at my very mention of this happy alteration; but I must profess, if I were absolutely prelatical, if I know my heart, I could not but choose for all that to rejoice. What! not rejoice at the prosperity of the church, because men differ in opinion about its order! Should I shut my eyes against the mercies of the Lord? The souls of men are not so contemptible to me, that I should envy them the bread of life, because it is broken to them by a hand that had not the prelatical approbation. O that every congregation were thus supplied!"*

To determine accurately the character of the protector Cromwell, appears extremely difficult, from the extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed,—from the high commendations of his friends on the one hand, and from the unmeasured censures of his determined enemies on the other. Ambition is commonly said to have been his ruling passion; to the gratification of which, every thing was made subservient, in supporting his usurpation. Without becoming the apologists of that great man, or justifying any of his improprieties and faults, it may, perhaps, with truth be said, that Cromwell's ambition was at least partly defensive; at the same time, all parties agree in bearing witness to the strict morality of his private life, and to his habits of temperance and chastity—they testify his munificent liberality in promoting the interests of science and religion; his public and private devotion; his

* Baxter's Works, Vol. XIV., p. 152, 153.

reverence for the doctrines of the Protestant faith ; and his uniform respect for the rights of conscience, by which all were equally protected in the free exercise of public worship.

We must not omit to notice in this place the origin of the Quakers, in the time of the Commonwealth. By their peculiarities, and their unconquerable zeal in preaching some of the great doctrines of the gospel, they soon became numerous. The founder of this denomination of Christians was George Fox, a man of obscure birth, but of sincere piety and persevering labours ; of unwearied diligence in his benevolent exertions, and of invincible patience in sufferings. His enthusiasm, at first, led him and some of his followers into occasional irregularities and absurd extravagancies, which none, even of his advocates, can by any means justify. They were accustomed to call themselves “*Seekers after Truth* ;” but afterwards they assumed the more appropriate appellation, “*Friends*,” by which they choose still to be called. They were denominated *Quakers* by their enemies, as a term of reproach.

Necessary to be mentioned, also, and worthy of being known by all our readers, as relating to religion at this period, is the convocation of the Westminster Assembly. This venerable body was convened by an “ordinance of the Lords and Commons in parliament, for settling the government and liturgy of the church of England.” The assembly of divines consisted of sixty laymen, and a hundred and twenty clergymen, chosen from the most learned and pious persons of the nation. The wise and excellent Mr. Baxter knew most of them, and he says, “They were men of eminent learning, godliness, ministerial abilities, and fidelity : as far as I am able to judge, by the information of history, and by any other evidences, the Christian world, since the days of the apostles, had never a synod of more excellent divines than this synod, and the synod of Dort.”

Their labours for the establishment of the discipline of Presbyterianism, in agreement with the national church of Scotland, were rendered ineffectual by the toleration granted by Cromwell, and by the restoration of monarchy and episcopacy with Charles II.

The larger and smaller catechisms of this assembly are the

standards of doctrine in the church of Scotland ; and its smaller catechism is used for the instruction of children, by a large proportion of the English Dissenters.

SECTION IV.—CHARLES II.

Restoration of Charles II.—His character—Restoration of episcopacy—Savoy conference—Puritans who conformed—Act of Uniformity—Two thousand ejected clergymen—Their character—Their sufferings—Their successors in the church—Originators of the Act, archbishop Sheldon and lord Clarendon—Conventicle Act—Five Mile Act—Astonishment of the Catholics at the sufferings of the Nonconformists—Number of sufferers—Few pious Conformist clergy—Dr. Thomas Gouge—His missionary labours—Honourable Robert Boyle—His efforts to advance Christianity—Plague in London—Fire in London—Labours of Dissenters.

OLIVER CROMWELL, dying in 1658, left the dignity of Protector to his son Richard. But about eight months after, he relinquished the dignity, and gladly retired to private life, as more agreeable to his habits and inclinations. Arrangements were made for the return of Charles II. from the Continent, and he entered London, May 29, 1660. The terms upon which Charles was restored have but little relation to our plan, except it be observed, that all his professions and promises, which he made respecting liberty of conscience, he soon falsified. The character of the sovereign, however, must be considered, in forming a correct opinion concerning the state of religion in England during his reign.

Charles II. is said to have been a complete gentleman in his manners ; possessing a brilliant and ready wit, and a most engaging affability. But as a prince, he inherited all the faults of his ancestors, together with a detestable vice peculiar to himself, a total want of sincerity, which influenced every part of his conduct. He aimed at being an absolute monarch ; but to accomplish this design, he would be at no further trouble than to give his corrupt ministers the liberty to do what they pleased. He regarded religion only as an engine of state, and his professions on this sacred subject were most grossly hypocritical. His court was the theatre of extravagance, profane-

ness, and debauchery; in all of which, the king himself was the most distinguished example.

The state of religion in England, during the reign of Charles II., may reasonably be thought to have been seriously affected by the character of the court; and such was unhappily the case. The true church of Christ suffered most grievously in this reign: men of serious religion were still almost wholly Puritans, and they were persecuted with every possible circumstance of unchristian intolerance and severity by the new government.

Charles II., both before and after his restoration, published declarations, drawn up in a spirit of conciliation. After expressing his intention to restore the Protestant church of England to its former condition, by the re-appointment of bishops, and the restitution of their alienated possessions, the king pledged himself to restrain, within due limits, the power of the hierarchy; to reform the liturgy, to allow the adoption or omission of ceremonies, as things indifferent, and to grant liberty of conscience to those who could not conform. Pursuant to this avowed moderation, the Savoy Conference was held, between several of the recently appointed bishops, and some of the most popular of the Nonconformist ministers. In this conference, the latter stated their principal objections to the liturgy, and the terms on which they would be able to unite cordially with the bishops in the services of the church. But as the bishops were previously determined to make no concessions, the result was, increased mutual dissatisfaction. A few of the episcopal party appear to have been sincerely desirous of conciliation and union; but their efforts proved fruitless, and the power of intolerance soon decided all controversy in favour of episcopacy and ceremonial uniformity, by several new acts of parliament.

At the Restoration, particularly on the king's declaration for liberty of conscience, a considerable number of the Puritan divines were induced to conform. Among these were some of the brightest luminaries the church of England ever enjoyed, as will be evident from the mention of a few of their names:—Barrow, Bull, Cudworth, Gurnal, Leighton, Lightfoot, Pocock,

Reynolds, Stillingfleet, Tillotson, Wallis, Ward, Whichcot, and Whitby. These were generally men of moderation, who would have been delighted to embrace the whole of their brethren within the enlarged pale of the church; but the demon of bigotry for awhile prevailed.

The particulars of those acts of parliament, under which the Puritans suffered persecution in the reign of Charles II., ought to be clearly and fully known, by all who would understand the history of the church of God in this country. In this place we can only just name them with a few brief remarks upon their operation.

Besides several other statutes, which reflect perpetual disgrace upon the ruling powers of Charles II., the most memorable and injurious were the "Act of Uniformity," the "Conventicle Act," and the "Oxford Five Mile Act."

The Act of Uniformity was a law made in the shameful violation of the royal declarations. It required all ministers of religion in England, to declare their unfeigned assent and consent, to all and every thing contained in the "Book of Common Prayer," to subscribe to the doctrine of passive obedience, both in civil and ecclesiastical matters.

The consequences of the Act of Uniformity must ever be deplored, though God in sovereign mercy overruled them for immense good. It took effect on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24th, 1662, and occasioned an exhibition of pious integrity to which the history of the world, through all ages, does not furnish a parallel! On that memorable day, after preaching farewell sermons to their congregations, more than two thousand of the clergy, faithful to their pious convictions, peacefully quitted their preferments, rather than violate their enlightened consciences in subscribing, as required, in declaration of their agreement with things which they disapproved.

The character of these clergymen ought to be considered, in judging of their decision. Neither immorality, nor heterodoxy, nor ignorance, nor the least disaffection to their sovereign, could be charged upon these venerable men; and, though it cannot be supposed they were all equally eminent as Christian ministers, many of them were possessed of profound learning, and the rarest ministerial talents and Christian

virtues. Bishop Burnet says, “ It raised a grievous cry over the nation ; for here were many men much valued and distinguished for their abilities and zeal, now cast out ignominiously, reduced to great poverty, and provoked by spiteful usage.”

The great philosopher, Mr. Locke, who lived through those times, and knew many of the ejected ministers, calls them “ worthy, learned, pious, orthodox divines, who did not throw themselves out of service, but were forcibly ejected.”

The amiable patriot, Mr. Wilberforce, observes, in speaking of Mr. Richard Baxter, who was one of them, “ They were shamefully ejected from the established church, in violation of the royal word, as well as the clear principles of justice.”

But the circumstances of these noble confessors of Christ, after their expulsion, are especially worthy of our consideration ; illustrating further the character of those times. They became the subjects of raillery in the pulpit ; they were exposed to public ridicule upon the stage, and to the gross insults of the licentious rabble in the streets. Some sought an asylum in foreign Protestant countries ; others became tutors in noble families ; and others employed their talents in the professions of medicine and the law. Some, having property, retired to live upon their estates ; but not a few were obliged to endure a series of the most painful privations. Many, like the persecuted apostles, dared not to refrain from preaching Jesus Christ ; by which they became obnoxious to the severest sufferings.

A respectable Conformist writer says, “ It is impossible to relate the number of the sufferings both of ministers and people ;—the great trials, with hardships upon their persons, estates, and families, by uncomfortable separations, dispersions,unsettlements, and removes ; disgraces, reproaches, imprisonments, chargeable journeys, expenses in law, tedious sicknesses, and incurable diseases, ending in death ; great disquietments and affrights to the wives and families, and their doleful effects upon them. Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance, to help them out of prison, or maintain them there. Though they were as frugal as possible, they could hardly live : some lived on little more than brown bread and water ; many had but eight or ten pounds a year to

maintain a family, so that a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in six weeks' time: their allowance could scarcely afford them bread and cheese. One went to plough six days, and preached on the Lord's-day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood. The zealous justices of peace knew the calamities of the ministers, when they issued out warrants upon some of the hearers, because of the poverty of the preachers." Mr. Baxter says, " Many hundreds of them, with their wives and children, had neither house nor bread. The people they left were not able to relieve them; nor durst they, if they had been able, because it would have been called a maintenance of schism or faction. Many of their ministers, being afraid to lay down their ministry after they had been ordained to it, preached to such as would hear them, in fields and private houses; till they were apprehended, and cast into jail, where many of them perished."

The provision which was made to supply the vacant churches after the expulsion of those excellent confessors of the truth of Christ, was worthy of the guilty origin of the pernicious measure. Many parishes were left entirely destitute, the courtly divines receiving each the revenues of several livings; and many others were occupied by inexperienced youths, who were ordained before they had completed their academical studies. Bishop Burnet observes, " What the bishops did was a pattern to all their lower dignitaries, who generally took more care of themselves than of the church: the men of service were loaded with many livings, and many dignities. With this accession of wealth, there broke in upon the church a great deal of luxury and high living, on pretence of hospitality; and with this overset of wealth and pomp that came upon men in the decline of their age, they who were now growing into old age became lazy and negligent in all the true concerns of the church."

The names of the principal originators of such persecuting laws against men of such piety and excellence, as the non-conforming ministers were, deserve to be universally published to all the world, as their characters will be revealed at the day of judgment.

Dr. Bates, who was intimately acquainted with the court

intrigues, says, “ The ministers fell a sacrifice to the wrath and revenge of the old clergy, and to the servile compliance of the young gentry with the court, and their distaste of serious religion.” But the principal agent in procuring the unrighteous laws of this reign, and especially the Act of Uniformity, was archbishop Sheldon, with lord Clarendon, who prevailed with the council against every degree of toleration or relief for which the Puritan ministers petitioned.

The Conventicle Act was passed in 1664. It was designed to prevent the total desertion of the parish churches, which was extensively the case, as their faithful ministers had been expelled, and effectually to silence the ejected ministers, to whom the people adhered with singular fidelity and affection. This act subjected to severe penalties all those who either officiated or were present at any meeting held for religious purposes, in which the worship was not conducted exclusively by the forms of the Common Prayer: it empowered all magistrates to levy a fine of £5 upon each person, or to imprison for three months, for the first offence; a fine of £10, or to imprison for six months, for the second offence; and a fine of £100, or to be transported for seven years, for the third offence; and in case of returning or escape, to the suffering of death without benefit of clergy!

While the papists deny the use of the Scriptures to the people, and lay them aside for traditions as authoritative, we do not wonder at the enacting and publishing intolerant canons; but for the Protestants, with the Bible open before them, to pass such shocking laws, utterly repugnant both to the letter and spirit of the Christian religion, is more than astonishing!

The Conventicle Act was a terrible scourge to the nation; and it was rigorously enforced by the authority of the bishops. Archbishop Sheldon sent orders to all the bishops of his province, to return the names of all the ejected Nonconformist ministers, with their places of abode, and manner of life, with a view to enforce the laws more strictly against them. By these measures the jails throughout the country were quickly filled with the Nonconformists. Some of the ministers, after attending public worship at church, were disturbed for delivering a short exhortation to a few of their parishioners; their houses

were burst open, and their hearers taken into custody: warrants were issued for levying twenty pounds on the minister, the same sum on the house, and five pounds upon each of the hearers. If the money was not immediately paid, a seizure was made of the goods, wares, or cattle, which were sold for sums far less than their value. If the seizure did not answer the fine, the minister and people were hurried to prison, and held under confinement for three or six months; and informers being encouraged by the ruling clergy, multitudes followed this scandalous but lucrative employment.

So great was the severity of the times, and the arbitrary proceedings of the justices, that many were afraid to pray in their families, or even to say grace at their meals, if five strangers were present at table. But to avoid this law, the pious people, like the primitive Christians, when forbidden by their pagan persecutors to assemble for public worship, met frequently in the night, and in the most private places, "dens, and caves of the earth;" yet they were often discovered, and dragged to prison: still in all their hardship, like their blessed Lord and Master, they never resisted, but went quietly with the soldiers or officers.

Barbarous and infamous as was the Conventicle Act, this was not the worst: inhuman bigotry had not yet expended all its ingenuity; nor were all the pious Nonconformists destroyed; they appeared undiminished in number, and other means were tried, still more worthy of evil spirits.

The Five Mile Act was passed in 1665, under the influence of lord Clarendon, and archbishop Sheldon. This was designed effectually to extirpate Dissenters, by depriving them of the means of subsistence. The Act imposed upon them an unreasonable oath, which, as some noble lords of that day declared, "no honest man could take." In case of refusal, it restrained all dissenting ministers from coming within five miles of any city, town, or place where they had exercised their ministry, or had preached in any conventicle, on the penalty of £40 for every such offence; one-third to the king, another to the poor, and the rest to the informers!

Many, no doubt, will be deeply affected, while they are astonished to learn, only by so much as is here related of the

sufferings which were endured by the English Nonconformists and Dissenters. But language would altogether fail to describe the extent of the sufferings of those noble confessors of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

The miseries which these Dissenters endured by the persecuting prelates, confounded some of even the reflecting Roman Catholics; one of whom, the Earl of Castlemain, truly remarked, "It was never known that Roman Catholics persecuted, as the bishops do, those who adhere to the same faith with themselves; and established an Inquisition against the professors of the strictest piety among themselves; and however bloody the persecutions of queen Mary, it is manifest that their persecution exceeds it; for under her there were not more than two or three hundred put to death; whereas, under their persecution, above treble that number have been rifled, destroyed, and ruined in their estates, lives, liberties; being, as is most remarkable, men for the most part of the same spirit with those Protestants who suffered under the prelates of queen Mary's time!"

No reflections could be more natural and just than those of the Roman Catholic earl; while they, in a measure, indicate the dreadful malignity of that bigotry which urged the persecution of a religion, and being the avowed ministers of that religion, whose spirit is the most enlarged charity between man and man! Abused name of Christianity! angels, if possible for them to weep, must shed tears on review of its being so grievously dishonoured.

How many there were who suffered under these persecuting laws, it is altogether impossible to ascertain correctly. The losses in lives and property, endured by the Puritans, during the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., were immense beyond calculation. But it was computed, by competent persons of those times, that under the persecuting statutes against Dissenters, during the reign of Charles II., and the short reign of James II., about seventy thousand families of them were ruined in England, and about eight thousand persons perished in prison! Lists of the names of sixty thousand persons, who had suffered on account of religion, had been collected by Mr. Jeremiah White, more than

five thousand of whom had died in prison, in the reign of Charles II. James II. heard of the manuscript of Mr. White, and offered him a thousand guineas for it; but he refused the amount: yet, after reflecting on the consequences of its publication, he generously burnt it, that he might not add fuel to the fire of enmity already raging.

From what has now been recorded, it may be inquired, whether there were no pious Conformist divines, of genuine Christian principles. To this inquiry, bishop Burnet's testimony will partly furnish an answer: he says, “The number of sober, honest clergymen was not great.” Such of the clergy as were averse to the lieentious and arbitrary measures of the court, were declaimed against, as betrayers of the church: and, therefore, in general, those who were of tolerant principles were necessitated to preserve silence. There were, indeed, several of sterling excellence, but of inconsiderable influence, during these times, and who became the chief ornaments of the church of England after the Revolution.

There were two characters of extraordinary excellency and usefulness in these times, of whom it would be culpable not to speak in this place. Mr. Thomas Gouge, and the honourable Mr. Robert Boyle, whose exertions to promote the prosperity of the cause of Christ among men, have immortalized their names.

Thomas Gouge was one of the two thousand ejected ministers. He had been educated in the university of Cambridge, and fulfilled the duties of a vigilant and faithful pastor of St. Sepulchre's, London, for twenty-four years. He is represented as a wonder for personal piety, charity, humility, and moderation. He was possessed of a good estate, which he devoted to the honour of God, and the benefit of mankind. He travelled annually through Wales, in the towns of which he established three or four hundred schools, and preached the gospel, till he was forbidden and excommunicated by the bishops. He obtained the co-operation of several eminent men, both among Conformists and Nonconformists, and printed, chiefly at his own expense, eight thousand Welch Bibles, one thousand of which were given to the poor, and the rest were sold at an under rate, in the principal towns.

He printed great numbers of several other good books, for gratuitous distribution among the poor. He died in 1681, aged seventy-seven, in the joyful hope of a blissful immortality. Though a Dissenter, Dr. Tillotson, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, preached his funeral sermon, in which he says, "All things considered, there have not been, since the primitive times of Christianity, many among the sons of men, to whom that glorious character of the Son of God might be better applied, that "he went about doing good."

The honourable Robert Boyle was a man distinguished alike by birth, genius, and learning; and that which infinitely surpassed them all, by unfeigned and fervent piety. He could not, therefore, be contented to live to himself. He was a son of the earl of Cork, and educated at the university of Oxford, where, after his travels, he fixed his residence on account of the disorders of the times. Here he collected around him a select circle of men, devoted, like himself, to science and philosophy. This association at first styled themselves, "The Philosophical College," and from which arose, after the Restoration, "The Royal Society of London." Mr. Boyle wrote numerous valuable treatises on philosophical, critical, moral, and religious subjects: but that which was most remarkably conspicuous in his character, and most beneficial to mankind, was his enlarged and diffusive piety. His spirit was truly catholic and Christian; leading him to esteem as brethren both the excellent Nonconformists, and the pious among the Conformists, and to seek among both the most sacred communion of spirit.

He patronized missions to the heathen, to which he contributed largely. He was elected president of the society, which the Puritans induced the Long Parliament to incorporate, for the promoting of Christianity among the American Indians. To the missionary labours of Eliot the Puritan, and his colleagues, among that wretched people, he contributed about three hundred pounds a year. At his expense, a translation was made of the New Testament into the Malayan tongue, and an edition of it was circulated in the East Indies; and by his influence with the East India Company, they were excited to afford a measure of countenance to such

labours. He procured a translation of the New Testament into the Turkish language—he contributed largely to an edition of the Welch Bible, and gave £700 towards an edition of the Irish Bible. He founded a Lecture in England, in defence of the gospel against the daring infidels of the reign of Charles II.; and, according to bishop Burnet, who preached his funeral sermon, he devoted more than a thousand pounds a year to advance the interests of pure religion. He entered his eternal rest in 1691. Such men as Gouge and Boyle do honour to human nature, and “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour;” while their benevolent labours, and their Christian temper, make intolerance and persecution still more to be abhorred.

There were two other events which occurred during the reign of Charles II., too memorable to remain unnoticed, and especially as they called forth an exhibition of the most exalted religious zeal.

First, the dreadful plague in London, in 1665, by which nearly ten thousand of its inhabitants died weekly! The other was the tremendous conflagration in 1666, by which thirteen thousand houses, and eighty-nine churches, were destroyed!

During these awful visitations of Providence, the Christian benevolence and pious zeal of the ejected ministers were most eminently exemplified, to their everlasting honour; though they were recompensed for their merciful and disinterested labour, in this respect, by additional persecutions!

Their services of mercy deserve special mention in this place, as illustrating their principles still farther. In the time of the plague, nearly the whole of the churches in the metropolis were deserted by the Conformist clergy; while crowds of people, in the most awful consternation, flocked to the sanctuary of God, to seek the consolations of religion, and the way of life and salvation. The ejected ministers, supposing that a case so extraordinary would fully justify their disregard of the persecuting statutes, gladly embraced the opportunity, which now presented itself to them, of occupying the vacant pulpits; and they preached the gospel of Christ, with surprising success, to the terrified and wretched population. In like manner,

after the calamitous fire, they fitted up large rooms, and numerous places of worship, erected with wood, which they called "Tabernacles," in which vast multitudes received the consolations of divine truth. But these labours of pure Christian benevolence were rewarded, in many instances, with heavy fines and ruinous imprisonment!

Charles II. died in 1685, under circumstances of hypocrisy and criminality, the detail of which excites horror in the mind of every serious believer in the Holy Scriptures.

SECTION V.—JAMES II.

Character of James II.—Policy of James towards Dissenters—Their persecutions—Judge Jeffries—Lady Lisle—Mrs. Grant—State of religion in England in the reign of James II.

JAMES II. was brother of the late monarch, whose licentious habits prevented his having legitimate children. He inherited the same lofty notions of the absolute power of kings; while his moral character is represented as equally bad, or even worse than that of his brother Charles II.; James being malignant, revengeful, and sanguinary. He attempted to conceal his vices under the mask of devotion, which he observed according to the rites of the Roman Catholic church, and the interests of which he endeavoured to promote, as the means of securing his royal prerogative.

The Dissenters gained but little by the succession of James II., by whom they were indulged or persecuted according as it appeared to the king likely to advance the popish cause, or his own absolute power; the court prelates joining in almost every oppressive measure against them. The sufferings of the Non-conformists in this reign were extremely grievous, by means of the spiritual courts, which were crowded with business through an active host of base informers. On some occasions, dissenting ministers could neither travel on the road, nor appear in public, except in disguise; indeed, they were afraid to be seen in the houses of their friends, pursuivants from the spiritual courts being always abroad, and upon the watch for them.

The nature and degree of the persecution of Dissenters in these times, may be further understood, partly from an address and petition of the Quakers, presented to the king and parliament, in the year after the accession of James II. Among numerous other grievances of a dreadful kind, which that body endured, they say, “ Now there remain in prison one thousand three hundred and eighty-three, of whom two hundred are women ! Above three hundred and fifty have died in prison, since the year 1660, near one hundred of whom since the year 1680. In London, the jail of Newgate has been crowded within these two years, sometimes with near twenty in a room, whereby several have been suffocated ; and others, who have been taken out sick, have died of malignant fevers within a few days.” With their address, the Quakers presented a list of their friends in prison, in several counties, amounting to one thousand four hundred and sixty, not for any act of criminality, but on account of their nonconformity to the religious rites of the church of England !

The character of judge Jefferies is proverbial for brutal ferocity, which was long directed, in an especial manner, against the Nonconformists ; and as not a few of the magistrates partook largely of his spirit, it will not be wondered at, that the sufferings which they endured were severe, and particularly as it was considered criminal to be wanting in zeal against them. The relation of a few circumstances will illustrate the general character of chief justice Jefferies, that shocking scourge of the Dissenters. When he made a circuit through the western counties, after the rebellion of the duke of Monmouth, he showed the people, that the rigours of the law might equal, if not exceed, the ravages of military tyranny. He caused one hundred and nine persons to be executed at Dorchester ; a great number at Exeter, Taunton, and Wells ; and, in a word, besides those butchered by the military commanders, two hundred and fifty-one are computed to have fallen by the hands of pretended justice. The whole country was strewed with hands and limbs of those who had been executed as traitors. Every village, almost, beheld the dead carcass of a wretched inhabitant. Bishop Burnet says, that “ in several places in the west,

there were executed near six hundred persons; and that the quarters of two or three hundred were fixed on gibbets, and hung on trees all over the country for fifty miles around, to the terror of travellers." Jefferies, in his savage glory, boasted, that he had "hanged more than all the judges of England since the time of William the Conqueror." At his return from this bloody work, he was rewarded with the office of "Lord High Chancellor!"

Among the most remarkable executions of these times, were those of lady Lisle and Mrs. Guant; both of whom were put to death for acts of charity, in relieving and securing those who were doomed as rebels. Lady Lisle had admitted a Presbyterian minister into her house, for which she was tried. She declared, that she had no knowledge of his having been in the duke's army, and the jury three times gave a verdict of "Not guilty;" but they were repeatedly sent back by Jefferies, by whom they were at length compelled by his menaces to give a sentence against her, and she was beheaded. She was above eighty years of age when she suffered!

Mrs. Guant spent great part of her time and property in works of mercy, visiting the jails and the poor. Out of compassion, she received into her house Burton, one of Monmouth's men; but he, having heard of a proclamation which offered an indemnity and reward to those who discovered criminals, was so hardened in base ingratitude, as to betray his benefactress, bearing witness against her. He received a pardon for his treachery; for her charity she was burnt alive at Tyburn, where she suffered with great fortitude and devotion, in the spirit of a Christian.

From what has already been stated, it will be evident that the state of religion in England, during the reign of James II., could not have been externally flourishing. The nation generally continued awfully sunk in profaneness and irreligion; yet the power of godliness was very considerable, chiefly among the several denominations of Dissenters; and evidently not the least among the Quakers, whose severe trials were the means which God blessed to quicken and benefit the Friends. And though these several classes of Dissenters were so cruelly

persecuted, and so many thousands of them had been ruined, there appeared to be no diminution in their numbers, but rather an increase.

Our limits will not allow us to make extended observations upon every thing worthy of record in the reign of James II.; but it may be generally noticed, that the arbitrary proceedings of the king against the liberties of the people, in his determined efforts to establish popery in England, occasioned to him the loss of his crown, and led to the glorious Revolution under William, prince of Orange. That worthy prince had married Mary, daughter of James II., and in the year 1688 they ascended the throne of Great Britain.

SECTION VI.—WILLIAM AND MARY.

Character of William and Mary—Conduct of William in Holland—Toleration Act—Fifteen new bishops of moderate principles—William seeks pious clergymen—Ecclesiastical commission to revise the liturgy—Their labours defeated by Dr. Jane—Six hundred alterations proposed in the liturgy—State of religion in England—The Dissenters build chapels—Associations to promote religion—Testimony of bishop Burnet.

NATURALLY might we suspect the character of the daughter of James II., and suppose her to be equally unworthy with him; but she was a woman of opposite principles to those of her father. The rare and various excellencies of Mary, wife of William, prince of Orange, eminently adorned her royal dignity, when she became queen of England. She was a person of singular and Christian virtue; from the whole tenour of her life, and especially from her state of mind during her last illness, it manifestly appeared, that she was not merely a patron of religion, but that herself was a firm believer in the gospel, and a sincere disciple of Jesus Christ.

As to the character of William III., we have the most satisfactory proof of its superior excellency. The best historians speak in the highest terms of William. From the peculiar circumstances of Europe, in his time, William was necessitated to become a martial prince: yet he exercised his sovereign power in England with singular moderation, though he was

placed in a situation the most critical and extraordinary. He was a decided Protestant; an enemy to persecution; and, it is believed, a man of serious personal piety.

The testimony of bishop Burnet, who was intimately acquainted with his principles and character, agrees with that of others, especially of Mr. Belsham, who speaks of him in the following terms: "He believed firmly in the truth of religion, and entertained a high sense of its importance. But his tolerant passions, and his indifference to the forms of church government, made him obnoxious to the great body of the clergy. He appeared born for the purpose of opposing tyranny, persecution, and oppression; and for the space of thirty years, it is not too much to affirm, that he sustained the greatest and most truly glorious character of any prince whose name is recorded in history. In his days, and by his means, the first firm and solid foundations were laid of all that is most valuable in civil society. Every vindication of the natural and unalienable rights of mankind was, till he ascended the throne of Great Britain, penal and criminal. To him we owe the assertion and final establishment of our constitutional privileges. To sum up all, his character was distinguished by virtues rarely found amongst princes—moderation, integrity, simplicity, beneficence, magnanimity. Time, which has cast a veil over his imperfections, has added lustre to his many great and admirable qualities. His political views were in the highest degree laudable and upright. He had true ideas of the nature and true end of government, and the beneficial effects of his noble and heroic exertions will probably descend to the latest generations; rendering his name justly dear to the friends of civil and religious liberty, and his memory ever Glorious and Immortal."

The several measures which were adopted by this great prince, for the preservation and advancement of religion, corresponded with the high character which is here given of him. While presiding over the Dutch republic, the prince of Orange witnessed the beneficial effects of religious union, arising, not from compulsory statutes, with terrible penalties, which never could make men of one mind, but from an unlimited toleration. Impressed with the lesson which he had learnt, in seeing the

harmony of different denominations of Christians living under the same civil government, he avowed his determination, before he ascended the English throne, to protect all his subjects from the demon of persecution. Several motions, made by his ministers, for the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, having been opposed and lost, they brought in a bill, which passed into a law, called “The Toleration Act;” which exempted Dissenters from the penalties of former acts, and established the religious liberties of our country.

This Act alone, though it did not fully meet the wishes of his enlarged mind, would have deservedly immortalized the name of William III.: but he attempted many other services for the advancement of true religion. Several of the old bishops, retaining their affection for the intolerant policy of the Stuarts, by which the Dissenters had been oppressed, refused to take the oath of allegiance to William, from which they were called “Nonjurors.” Their vacant sees were filled with the objects of his own choice. Gilbert Burnet, who had been obliged to fly to the Continent from the persecution of James II., returned with William and Mary, by whom he was rewarded with the bishopric of Sarum. Dr. Tillotson was prevailed upon to accept the primacy, and was announced archbishop of Canterbury; and Dr. Sharp was made archbishop of York; these being esteemed the best preachers of their day in the church of England. Dr. Patrick was made bishop of Ely, Dr. Moore of Norwich, Dr. Cumberland of Peterborough, and Dr. Fowler of Gloucester. In the course of two years, the king had made fifteen bishops, who were esteemed the most learned, wise, and exemplary men that had ever filled their respective sees. They constituted the golden age of episcopacy in England; and feeling the imperious necessity of rendering the establishment respectable in the eyes of the nation, that they might maintain her ascendancy over the Dissenters, they submitted to become preaching bishops, which was a happy and edifying novelty; though it exposed them to much vexatious opposition from the great, who considered their pious zeal as puritanism!

As far as the king was able, he sought out and promoted pious clergymen, and laboured to grant satisfaction to

Dissenters, that he might unite them to the church. For this purpose, a commission was appointed to review the liturgy and canons, and to purify them from their errors and objectionable passages.

The labours of this commission are too important, in the history of religion in our country, to be passed over unnoticed, though comparatively few know any thing of its existence, scarcely any of the historians of England making the slightest allusion to it in their records. The commission consisted of thirty divines, ten of whom were bishops. Four of them, men of contracted souls, and intolerant principles, declined taking any part in the business, declaring, that they were against any alterations; that they thought too much had been already done for the Dissenters, in granting them toleration, and they would do nothing to make conformity easier. Such is the unhallowed spirit by which all the persecutions have been carried on through all ages, according as the laws have favoured their unchristian bigotry.

The other members of this body proceeded with their commission, they being mostly men of moderation and piety, and of so great worth, that it is believed the church of England never had, at one period, such a number of superior clergymen, so eminently qualified for the difficult work. In speaking of their diligent and hopeful labours, a writer of the establishment says, that among other alterations, "the Apocryphal lessons were rejected; the use of the Athanasian creed was left optional; new collects were drawn up, more agreeable to the epistles and gospels, with that elegance and brightness of expression, and such a flame of devotion, that nothing could more affect and excite the hearts of the hearers, and raise up their thoughts to God. They were first prepared by Dr. Patrick; Dr. Burnet added to them force and spirit; Dr. Stillingfleet afterward examined them with great judgment, carefully weighing every word in them; and Dr. Tillotson had the last hand, giving them some free and masterly strokes of his sweet and flowing eloquence. Dr. Kidder made a new version of the Psalms, more agreeable to the original. Dr. Tennison made a collection of the words and expressions throughout the liturgy which had been excepted against, and proposed others

in their room that were clear and plain, and less liable to exception. The cathedral chanting was to be laid aside, and the service to be performed in an intelligible manner: kneeling at the sacrament to be indifferent; the cross in baptism, and also godfathers and godmothers, to be left to the choice of the parents, who should be allowed to present their children in their own names."

The judicious labours of those truly great men were regarded by moderate observers of both parties with a lively interest; because they considered it as a measure likely to become effectual in reconciling the principal Dissenters to the service of the church of England. But the valuable efforts of those worthy and pious divines were rendered utterly fruitless by the disappointed ambition of Dr. Jane. He being chosen prolocutor of the convocation, prevailed on a majority of that body, to cherish their high church notions, and oppose every concession in favour of Dissenters, though seconded by the king himself. The reason of this procedure was, Dr. Jane had become an avowed enemy to king William, for having refused his solicitation for the bishopric of Exeter.

Six hundred alterations, thus proposed and made in the standard services of the church of England, by such men as Beveridge, Burnet, Fowler, Kidder, Patrick, Scott, Sharp, Stillingfleet, Tennison, Tillotson, and Williams, independently of the consideration of reading prayers being contrary to the practice of the Christians for the first three hundred years, are said fully to justify the objections of the Dissenters against the present liturgy.

The state of religion itself as to its vital power in England, during the reign of William and Mary, demands our attentive remark. An entirely new state of things arose: the Toleration Act, granting liberty and affording full protection to the Dissenters, the revival of religion was very considerable among them. Numerous chapels were built for them for their accommodation, in which the worship of God was regularly celebrated, and Christian communion, by conferences and prayer, was extensively cultivated and enjoyed. Happily for the cause of religion, in the generous spirit of piety, the Presbyterians and Independents formally united in Christian fellowship as

one people, and holy union in various ways was extensively promoted.

Ingenuity, directed by true catholic piety, originated many plans of benevolence, which were the means of incalculable benefit to the souls of men. Private associations were formed among those who were truly religious, for the advancement of the best interests of men, both temporal and spiritual : a few of them deserve special mention, as they are not generally known, and yet the revival of religion, in our times, is indebted to them as the blessed commencement of a series of exercises and plans, which seem to have been ordained to hasten on the kingdom of Christ upon earth.

In 1691 a “Society for the Formation of Manners” was established in London: another, consisting of about fifty tradesmen, “for suppressing disorderly houses;” with a society to preserve the office of constable respectable. Thirty-five religious societies were formed in London, to seek a revival of religion, by prayer and frequent conference. The same plans were adopted in various parts of England and Ireland. In Dublin these societies were joined by bishops and many of the clergy. But a powerful and violent party in the church loaded with extreme abuse those of their brethren who formed any union with the Dissenters in their works of piety.

Still some continued, for several years, diligent and active ; so that by the pious zeal of the moderate clergy, religion greatly revived in the church of England, and many of the customs of the Dissenters were, to a considerable extent, adopted and followed by them. From these voluntary associations arose those societies for the “promotion of religion,” and from these that “Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.” King William and his pious queen, perceiving the importance of this, incorporated the archbishops, bishops, nobility, &c., including all the members of the former societies, into the society still existing under the above title; but much of its voluntary and Christian character being lost by its incorporation, after a few years it sunk into comparative uselessness.

Bishop Burnet speaks of these good works, in the “History of his own Times,” mostly concealing in how great a degree they were promoted by his own instrumentality. The account

is honourable to the writer, as it yields to the Dissenters that which many have been willing to deny--their former diligence in every work of Christian love. The bishop says, "In James's reign, the fear of popery was so strong, as well as just, that many, in and about London, began to meet often together, both for devotion and their further instruction: things of this kind had been formerly practised only among the Puritans and Dissenters: but these were of the church, and came to their ministers, to be assisted with forms of prayer and other directions: they were chiefly directed by Dr. Beveridge and Dr. Horneck. Some disliked this, and were afraid it might be the original of new factions and parties; but wiser and better men thought it was not fit and decent to check a spirit of devotion at such a time: it might have given scandal, and it seemed a discouraging of piety, and might be a means to drive well-meaning persons over to the Dissenters. After the Revolution these societies became more numerous, and, for a greater encouragement to devotion, they got such collections to be made as maintained many clergymen to read prayers in so many places, and at so many different hours, that devout persons might have that comfort at every hour in the day. There were constant sacraments every Lord's-day in many churches; there were both greater numbers and greater appearances of devotion at prayers and sacraments, than had been observed in the memory of man. These societies resolved to inform the magistrates of swearers, drunkards, profaners of the Lord's-day, and of lewd houses; from this they were called "Societies of Reformation." Some good magistrates encouraged them, but others treated them roughly. As soon as queen Mary heard of this, she did, by her letters and proclamations, encourage these good designs, which were afterwards prosecuted by the king. Other societies set themselves to raise charity schools, for teaching poor children, for clothing them, and binding them out to trades. Many books were printed and sent over the nation by them, to be freely distributed; these were called "Societies for Promoting Christian Knowledge." In many places in the nation, the clergy met often together, to confer about matters of religion and learning; and they got libraries to be raised for their common use. At last a corpo-

ration was raised by the king for propagating the gospel among infidels, for settling schools in our plantations, for furnishing the clergy that were sent thither, and for sending missionaries among such of our plantations as were not able to provide pastors for themselves. It was a glorious conclusion of a reign that was begun with preserving our religion, thus to create a corporation for propagating it to the remotest parts of the earth, and among infidels : then were very liberal subscriptions made to it by many of the bishops and clergy, who set about it with great care and zeal.”

CHAPTER V.—SCOTLAND.

SECTION I.—JAMES I.

Scotland affected by the changes in England—Proceedings of James to overturn the national church of Scotland—James visits Scotland—Sufferings of the Scotch by High Commission and Bishops' Courts.

SCOTLAND would necessarily be affected in a considerable degree by all the changes which took place in England, especially in matters relating to religion. Very extensively the power of godliness prevailed among the Scotch ; but the tyrannical bigotry of the kings and prelates of England was severely felt by them, in a long succession of grievous persecutions, similar to those which were endured by the English Puritans.

It will be remembered, that the church of Scotland, in their reformation, rejected prelaticeal episcopacy, as altogether unscriptural ; as being an essential part of popery, and injurious in the extreme to the interests of serious piety ; and that in its stead, they adopted the Presbyterian equality of pastoral bishops, as the manifest institution of Christ and his apostles.

Such an establishment could not possibly have cordial friends among the popish bishops and clergy, and it was exceedingly disliked by the ruling priesthood in England ; especially from the time that Bancroft, in 1588, published the doctrine of the divine right of prelaticeal bishops. When, therefore, James, king of Scotland, succeeded to the English throne, and was

surrounded by that order of dignitaries, whose flattery of the vain monarch has become proverbial in history, and he adopted his favourite maxim, “No bishop, no king,” he determined, under their direction, to subvert the constitution of the church of Scotland; and, in its stead, to substitute the episcopal form of government.

The weakness and hypocrisy of James were evident by the manner in which he proceeded in overturning presbyterianism, and establishing prelacy in Scotland. That unprincipled king had repeatedly declared in public his conviction, that the church of Scotland was the purest upon earth; and on leaving his native country, he solemnly uttered and published his resolution not to alter its constitution. But even at that very time, and long before, he corresponded with Bancroft, bishop of London, for the purpose of contriving its subversion! The Scots were soon aware of the king’s intention, and he was necessitated to proceed with considerable caution. In 1606, the ministers of James gained a majority in the Scotch parliament, in favour of an Act for restoring the bishops, against which the general assembly of the church published a solemn protest. It was, however, agreed afterwards, in a convention of the nobles and courtiers, that the bishops should be perpetual moderators in ecclesiastical assemblies; at the same time it was declared, that no intention was entertained to alter the church discipline, and a general assembly was convened to sanction these new measures. The High Commission was put into the hands of the bishops, and their spiritual authority was modelled and defined by the direction of courtiers. To give them a spiritual character, they were sent for to London, to receive consecration from the English bishops, that they might convey the same to other of their brethren in Scotland.

Thus was the church of Scotland overthrown by the unprincipled kingcraft of the hypocritical sovereign, under the ambitious archbishop Bancroft, who died the same year, 1610.

But the mere constitution of bishops was not sufficient to satisfy the king. In contradiction of his own royal word, and the solemn declarations of his ministers, James was determined on compelling his subjects to observe a complete uniformity,

in religious ceremonies, throughout his dominions. To accomplish this, new articles were drawn up, and sent to the general assembly of Scotland for their adoption ; but the clergy, manifesting little disposition to comply with the king's wishes, he resolved to enforce compliance by his august presence.

For this purpose, in 1617, James visited Scotland. Holyrood House having been previously fitted up as a cathedral, adorned with pictures, and statues of the twelve apostles, taken from the palace in London, that the royal chaplains might display the glories of prelatical grandeur. In this visit, his majesty treated his Scotch subjects with a haughty distance, presumptuously telling them, both in parliament and in general assembly, " that it was a power innate, a princely, special prerogative, which Christian kings have to order and dispose external things, in the outward policy of the church, or as we with our bishops shall think fit ; and, sirs, for your approving or disapproving, deceive not yourselves, I will not have my reason opposed."

At an assembly convened by the courtiers, in 1618, at Perth, five articles were carried subversive of the church discipline, and which, after much intrigue, and many threats from the king, were ratified in 1621, in the parliament at Edinburgh.

The clergy of Scotland refusing to publish the new articles, as being unscriptural, illegal, and contrary to the sense of the nation, were, in great numbers, suspended, fined, imprisoned, and banished, under the direction of the licentious men who composed the illegal court of High Commission. But during these violent proceedings, James I. died, in 1625, leaving his native country full of distractions, the fruit of his imprudence and intolerance.

SECTION II.—CHARLES I.

Charles pursues his father's policy—Laud his chief counsellor and agent in imposing episcopacy on the Scotch—Laud's service-book rejected by the whole nation—National League and Covenant—Charles declares them rebels—Leads an army against the Scotch—They meet the king with his army—In fear Charles consents to withdraw his episcopacy—Charles insincere—Laud urges him to renew the war with Irish soldiers—The Scots, aware of it, prepare to defend their church—The armies meet—Charles obliged to abolish his episcopacy, and to call a parliament—The court prelates reproach the king on his return.

CHARLES I. inherited the principles and adopted the policy of his misguided father. The evils of the past reign, therefore, continued, and were greatly increased. The bishops, who had been elevated in Scotland, and who were employed as the judges in the High Commission court, being elated with their dignity, behaved towards the Presbyterian party with a degree of arrogance which excited universal indignation. Sorrow and sadness filled the minds of the people throughout the country. On account of the prevailing disorders, the first Lord's-day in every month was generally observed by the ministers and people as a day of fasting and humiliation; and on these occasions the evils of a lordly prelacy, as opposed to the benevolent institutions of Christ, in the zealous and pious simplicity of their own pastoral bishops, were frequently pointed out, and pressed upon the attention of the people. By this means the nation felt more sensibly the unhallowed authority of the episcopal prelates, and the oppressive impositions of Charles.

Every thing had not been gained by the appointment of bishops; the whole system had not been completed; and, in endeavouring to support the new order of things in the church of Scotland, the king took the earliest opportunity to attempt the new modelling of public worship; and, acting under the influence of the violent bishop Laud, he determined to establish episcopacy in Scotland in its fullest extent, and to impose upon all his northren subjects a liturgy nearly resembling that of the church of England.

Laud had accompanied his majesty to Edinburgh at his

coronation, and had disgusted the Scotch, by preaching against the nakedness of their public worship, and upon the utility of ceremonies. He now prepared a service-book, to be used by all the congregations in Scotland, and transmitted it to the bishops, to be read on the Easter Sunday, in 1637. This was offensive in the extreme, and deemed a national insult; so that the whole nation rose against the attempt. Laud was informed of the repugnance of the people to the liturgy, and by the next Sunday an express was received from the headstrong archbishop, saying, it was the firm determination of his majesty to carry on the work which he had begun: but the people, equally firm, would yield nothing to the unconstitutional measure.

The nobility, the gentry, the clergy, and the burgesses, in four classes, formed a union, and bound themselves by a solemn covenant to maintain their independence, and to preserve their scriptural religion against popery, prelacy, and superstition. A general assembly of the church of Scotland was convened, by which episcopal prelacy was abolished, as contrary to the Word of God, and the covenant was required to be signed by all, on pain of excommunication.

The immediate consequence of this opposition of the Scotch to the king's measures, was, that he declared them rebels, against whom the injudicious Charles was persuaded to advance with a regular army of twenty thousand foot, and three thousand horse, with a fleet of five thousand marin s, determined to compel his northern subjects to submit to episcopacy and a liturgy, framed by his favourite archbishop. But the Scots, aware of his designs, without delay raised an army for their defence, and quickly marched to meet their sovereign, and justify their procedure in rejecting his illegal impositions.

On the frontiers of the kingdom, the two armies met. The royal forces were most numerous; but many of them favoured the cause of their northern brethren, being vexed in England with the oppressive measures of Laud and the bishops. The Scotch, confident of victory should their troops engage, were animated with one spirit; and regarding their cause as nothing less than the cause of God and truth, they had inscribed upon their colours, as their motto, " For Christ and his Covenant."

Perceiving that he could not depend upon his own troops, the king acceded to the terms which the Scotch humbly presented to him, by which a dreadful sacrifice of life was spared. Both armies were immediately disbanded, and a general assembly was called in Scotland. By this convocation, the service-book, the new canons, and the High Commission, were voted away, and it was unanimously determined that prelatical episcopacy was unlawful, unscriptural, and not to be allowed in the national church of Scotland.

In this pacification Charles I. could not be expected to be satisfied or sincere, having yielded to the petition of the Scotch only from the necessity of the case, because he perceived that his army was not to be depended on as hearty in his cause; and as they proceeded in so summary a manner, to abolish the system imposed on them by Laud, his favourite, he soon repented; and by his commissioners, signified his objection to their decisions. Mindful of their great purpose, and steadily pursuing their reformation, the Scotch added many aggravations to their former offence, by maintaining the institutions of their church, in opposition to episcopacy. Laud, therefore, sent to the lord deputy Wentworth in Ireland, who united with him in advising the king to set aside the pacification, and renew the war. With this counsel, they promised him an army of the Irish, and a large sum of money, and the king's council were led to approve of the proposition. To accomplish the object, active preparations were made immediately.

Acquainted with the designs of Charles, the Scotch were prompt to defend their reformation against the king with his Irish army. They were perfectly well assured, that not a few in England were wishing success to their cause. So oppressive were the illegal measures of Charles and his court, especially as carried on by the Star Chamber and other courts, without the sanction of parliament, that many patriotic English noblemen sent letters to the Scotch, encouraging them to defend themselves, and promising them assistance, as they clearly saw that the liberties of the two nations were at stake.

The armies met a second time; but the king's soldiers possessed no zeal for his unworthy cause, while the Scotch

advanced into England, sending a humble petition to the king, for him to confirm their Acts of parliament, recall his proclamation which styled them rebels, and call an English parliament to settle the peace of the two kingdoms.

Though his ambitious advisers had induced Charles to resolve on governing his subjects in a despotic manner, without parliaments, he was unable to confide in his soldiers, and therefore obliged to yield to these mortifying conditions. The following year the king made a second visit to Scotland, and conformed to the mode of worship in the national church, and even confirmed the acts of assembly, which declared, "that the government of the church by archbishops and bishops was contrary to the Word of God, and was therefore abolished."

On account of his conformity to the national church of Scotland, and his admission of the unscriptural character of their dignities, the English prelates dared to reproach their sovereign on his return. In this manner was the unhappy king flattered, deluded, and bewildered, by weak and wicked ministers, and a popish queen, while he sacrificed his honour, his conscience, and his peace, and involved the nation in a series of the most grievous calamities, which occasioned his ambitious favourites Wentworth and Laud, and ultimately himself, to terminate their wretched lives on a scaffold !

SECTION III.—COMMONWEALTH.

The Scotch enjoy their national religion—Testimony of bishop Burnet—Scotch ministers.

DURING the Commonwealth, the Scotch enjoyed their own forms of religious worship and government, without any molestation from the parliament. They, however, made several attempts to restore monarchy in the person of Charles II., then young, and whom they sent for from the Continent, and crowned at Scone in 1651, requiring him to take the covenant. But they were overpowered by the army of Cromwell and other generals, and their efforts rendered abortive.

As to the power of religion among the people, that was

great, and remarkably evident, as candid bishop Burnet testifies. He says, "Justice was carefully administered, and vice was suppressed and punished; there was a great appearance of devotion; the Sabbath was observed with uncommon strictness; none might walk the streets in the time of divine service, nor frequent public houses; the Lord's-days were spent in catechizing their children, singing psalms, and other acts of family devotion; insomuch that an acquaintance with the principles of religion, and the gift of prayer, increased prodigiously among the common people. Speaking of the Scots ministers, he says, "They were a brave and solemn people; their spirits were eager, and their tempers sour; but they had an appearance that created respect; they visited their parishes much, and were so full of Scripture, and so ready at extempore prayer, that from that they grew to practise sermons; for the custom of Scotland was, after dinner or supper, to read a chapter in the Bible, and when they happened to come in, if it was acceptable, they would on a sudden expound the chapter; by this means they had such a vast degree of knowledge, that the poor cottagers could pray extempore. Their preachers went all in one track, in their sermons, of doctrine, reason, and use; and this was so methodical, that the people could follow a sermon quite through every branch of it. It can hardly be imagined to what a degree these ministers were loved and reverenced by their people."

SECTION IV.—CHARLES II.

Charles II. restored, swearing to support the church of Scotland—He sacrifices his honour in destroying that church—Prelatical bishops sent into Scotland—Their character—Leighton an exception—His resignation of his bishopric—Sufferings of the persecuted Scotch—Neilson and M'Kail—Leighton prevailed upon to be made archbishop of Glasgow—Grieved with the cruelties of his episcopal colleagues—He resigns his dignity—Murder of archbishop Sharp—Character of Leighton.

RELIGION continued to flourish in Scotland until the restoration of monarchy in Charles II.; but, as in England, that event was followed with grievous persecutions. Charles was

restored on his making a solemn oath, and signing a declaration, to support the Presbyterian constitution of the church of Scotland; all which he afterwards promised, in a letter addressed to the presbytery of Edinburgh. Those who were at the head of the government, as well as Charles himself, were in general grossly immoral and licentious; and in violation of every principle of rectitude and honour, in the first parliament, it was determined to establish episcopacy in Scotland. Heralds were ordered to make proclamation of it at Edinburgh, and that was done with much pomp: but the people were shocked at the shameful sacrifice of the royal oath and promise.

A number of bishops was consecrated, and sent into Scotland to occupy the ancient popish sees; the pious and zealous Presbyterian ministers were ejected from their parishes, and Episcopalian placed in their room. An ambulatory Court of High Commission was established, similar to that in England, by which all who refused to comply with the new order of things, under the direction of the bishops, were harassed with the most unfeeling persecutions.

The general character of the new ministers bore but little resemblance to bishop Burnet's description of the former clergy. Both the bishops and the clergy who succeeded the Presbyterians were of a quite different class. Bishop Burnet declares of them, "They were mean and despicable in all respects; the worst preachers he ever heard; ignorant to a reproach, and many of them openly vicious; they were the disgrace of their order, and to the sacred functions, and were the dregs and refuse of the northern parts. The few who were above contempt or scandal, were of such violent tempers, that they were hated as the others were despised."

Among this new class of episcopal ministers there was at least one exception: it was in the eminently learned and exemplary Dr. Leighton, son of that Dr. Leighton who suffered so dreadfully from the High Commission court under archbishop Laud. This holy man was a perfect contrast to his prelatical brethren, and greatly beloved by the Presbyterians, though he had been induced to leave that body, and to conform to the orders of episcopacy. He had been led to accept of a bishopric, in the hope of promoting the cause of

religion and the welfare of his countrymen, by Christian kindness and a spirit of conciliation towards both parties. Leighton chose Dumblane for himself as the smallest diocese, and was consecrated in 1661, at London, with three others. The pomp and licentiousness of his prelatical brethren poignantly grieved the holy mind of the conscientious Leighton ; and against which he faithfully protested, as criminal and shameful; nor would he take any part in their extravagancies. He remonstrated with them on account of their oppressive cruelties by the High Commission Court ; and, with much diligence he laboured to correct or prevent the many existing evils : but finding his efforts of no avail, he came to London, declaring to the king, that he would not concur, even in planting Christianity itself, by such proceedings, much less in establishing a mere form of religious polity. He begged leave to retire from his bishopric, that the guilt and reproach of such criminal and shameful doings might not attach to him as one of the prelatical order. Moved by the representations of the pious Leighton, the king abolished that illegal court ; but persecuting intolerance still raged.

A brief sketch of these calamitous proceedings we cannot forbear giving, from the elegant pen of Pollok, author of the "Course of Time."

"Charles, advised by his English and Irish ministers, Clarendon and Ormond, and latterly by Lauderdale, secretary for Scotland, introduced the Episcopal form of worship into Scotland. Patronage was renewed ; and the clergy were required to procure a presentation from their patrons, and collation from their bishops ; to acknowledge their authority, and the spiritual supremacy of the king. The clergy in the northern districts complied without hesitation ; but their more pious and zealous brethren in the west, however willing they might be to submit to support the civil authority of the king, rejected his spiritual supremacy, refused submission to the Episcopal judicatories, and preferred rather to suffer the extremity of persecution than to sacrifice what they deemed the truth, and their duty to God. The people were no less averse from this encroachment on their religious privileges, and resolved to imitate their pastors,

whose engaging familiarity, and sanctity of manners, had gained them the esteem and love of their flocks.

" But if they had determined to suffer rather than renounce their beloved presbytery, the bishops, who had now got all power in Scotland into their hands, determined no less than the destruction of both. Burnet, archbishop of Glasgow, and the apostate Sharpe, primate of St. Andrews, with a cruelty little becoming mitred heads, prepared to carry this into effect. Ambulatory courts were established, on the principles of the Inquisition, in which the bishops were the judges of those whom they wished to destroy. No regard was had to remonstrance, or entreaty, or even to evidence. To these courts the military were subordinate, and instructed to carry their resolutions, which were often formed in the midst of riot and drunkenness, into execution. By this procedure three hundred and fifty clergymen were ejected from their livings, in the severity of winter, and driven, with their families, to seek shelter among the peasants. The most ignorant and vicious of their northern brethren, who scrupled at no compliance, were thrust, by the strong hand of power, into their places. The ignorance and shameful lives of these apostates from the covenant, who were now metamorphosed into curates, disgusted the people on whom they had been forced. Their doctrines had none of that heavenly relish which suited the taste of those who had been formerly taught by the best and most affectionate men. Their churches were deserted, and the people went into the mountains in search of that bread of life which no longer flowed from the pulpits.

" But this was only the beginning of their trials. Their pastors were soon forbidden to preach even in the fields, or to approach within twenty miles of their former charges; and all the people, as well as their pastors, who were not prepared to abjure their dearest rights, and to submit to the most galling despotism, were denounced as traitors, and doomed to capital punishment. To admit any one who refused compliance into shelter—to favour his escape, or not to assist in apprehending him,—subjected the person so convicted to the same punishment. To this military persecution succeeded. They were both the judges and the executioners. The very forms of jus-

tice were now wholly abandoned. Gentlemen, and peasants, and ministers, were driven out to wander among the morasses and mountains of the country,—were crowded into jails,—sent into exile and slavery,—and multitudes were daily writhing in the torture, or perishing on the gibbet. Rapes, robberies, and every species of outrage, were committed by the soldiers with impunity. The west of Scotland was red with the blood of its inhabitants, shed by their own countrymen. The spirit of darkness seemed to have entered into the bosoms of the persecutors, and to actuate all their doings. They appeared to delight in cruelty, and in shedding the blood of the innocent. But the glorious sufferers, relying on the goodness of their cause, and hoping in the promise of God, opposed sanctity of life to licentiousness and riot; the spiritual weapons of truth to the swords of their enemies; patient endurance, to fatigue, and want, and torture; and calm resignation to the most ignominious deaths. And truly they suffered not or bled in vain. God at last gave them the victory over all their enemies, and through them secured to us the religious privileges we this day enjoy.”*

Some of the Covenanters armed themselves against their Episcopal oppressors, who sought to satisfy their cruel disposition by inflicting the most extreme punishments on those who fell into their hands. “Two of those who were indicted to stand trial in a few days afterwards, were singled out as fit objects on which the council might exercise their cruelty. These were John Nielson of Corsack, and Hugh M‘Kail, an amiable young preacher, whom the council ordered to be put to the torture, in order to extort from them a confession that not prelatic oppression, but a determined spirit of rebellion, as Sharpe had informed the king, had occasioned the late rising. Both, however, though shrieking with agony, could be forced to declare nothing but the truth, repeatedly affirming, to the confusion of their tormentors, who still called on the executioner to give another stroke, that the ecruelties of the prelates alone had forced the people to arm in their own defence. Mr. Nielson was executed along with John Robertson, a young

* *The Persecuted Family*, by Robert Pollok, A. M.

preacher, and George Crawford, who left their dying testimony against prelacy, and of firm attachment to the covenants and the work of reformation; rejoicing in the belief, that though the adversaries of the church ‘might be permitted to prevail for a season, yet God would arise and plead the cause which was his own.’ Mr. M’Kail, together with John Woodrow, and four other martyrs, were executed, all of whom died rejoicing in the Lord. Mr. M’Kail, in particular, having addressed to the people a speech and testimony, which he had previously written and subscribed, bade adieu to the present, and weleomed the opening glories of a future state, in language truly sublime. ‘And now,’ said he, ‘I leave off to speak any more to creatures, and turn my speech to thee, O Lord! Now I begin my intercourse with God, which shall never be broken off. Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations! Farewell the world and all delights; farewell meat and drink! Farewell sun, moon, and stars! Welcome God and Father! Welcome sweet Jesus, Mediator of the New Covenant! Welcome blessed Spirit of grace, and God of all consolation! Welcome glory! Welcome eternal life, welcome death! O Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit; for thou hast redeemed my soul, Lord God of truth.’ While the people lamented the death of this amiable youth and his fellow-sufferers, they could not forbear expressing their just indignation at Sharpe, and the archbishop of Glasgow, who evidently acted the part of murderers, by concealing from the council, till after their execution, a letter from Charles, forbidding the shedding of any more blood.”*

On the expulsion of Burnet, the worthless archbishop of Glasgow, it was deemed a necessary policy to appoint a successor of moderate principles and temper. Leighton was thought the most suitable person, and after much entreaty he was prevailed upon to accept the dignity in 1669, on the king declaring that he was resolved to carry on the cause of episcopacy upon a different and more tolerant plan.

The unscriptural dignity of archbishop being not very agree-

* History of the Covenanters in Scotland. By the Author of the History of the Reformation, Vol. I., p. 208—210.—Edinburgh, 1830.

able to the genuine piety of the excellent Leighton, he was far from being happy in his new station. He regarded the responsibility of the office of far more consequence than its worldly greatness and honour; but finding it impossible to bring his irreligious colleagues to unite with him in his reforming and healing measures, he repaired again to England to the king, and resigned his archiepiscopal authority, in 1674, and spent the remaining ten years of his useful and holy life, at a parish in the county of Sussex. His commentary on the First Epistle of Peter, will carry down the name of Leighton with honour, as a scholar, divine, and Christian, to the latest posterity.

The unprincipled archbishop Sharpe fell a sacrifice to his own intolerance, by the hands of several assassins, 1779; but though no one could justify the tragical deed, his death was regretted by scarcely a single person, on account of the miseries he had occasioned to Scotland.

The character of Leighton deserves special mention. Bishop Burnet says, “He had the greatest elevation of soul, the largest compass of knowledge, the most mortified and most heavenly disposition, that I ever saw in mortal. I can say with great truth, that in a free and frequent conversation with him, for above two and twenty years, I never knew him speak an idle word, that had not a direct tendency to edification; and I never once saw him in any other temper but that which I wish to be in the last moments of my life.”

SECTION V.—JAMES II.

Sufferings of the Scotch—John Brown—Cameronians—Quotation from a Discourse of Dr. Samuel Charteris, of the church of England.

SCOTLAND continued in the reign of James II. to be grievously oppressed. The same destructive system, which had afflicted the people and disgraced the reign of Charles II., was allowed to remain; but it was carried on upon a more regular plan, and with still greater severities. No mercy was shown to any who were distinguished for a serious regard to the truths of the gospel; evident piety was identified with

treason and rebellion ; and all who manifested the least opposition to popery and superstition, were designated by James with the most opprobrious appellations.

It has been common for ignorant or party writers to represent the Scots of these times, as seditious, traitorous, and rebellious ; and their miseries as the fruits of their opposition to their lawful sovereign, and taking up arms against his government. Such a representation, however, is untrue, and utterly unworthy the statement of any intelligent author. Tyranny and illegal oppression had not only invaded, but almost destroyed their dearest rights, and the greatest wonder is, that the nation did not again rise against such violations of truth and right.

Claverhouse, a bigot officer, "was mad for tyranny and slavery against all who favoured presbytery, and frequently shot those who fell into his hands, though they were unarmed, without any form of trial ; and when his soldiers, sometimes shocked at the wantonness of his cruelty, hesitated in obeying his orders, he executed them himself. We have one striking example of this kind in the case of John Brown, in the parish of Muirkirk. Brown was a man of excellent character, by employment a carrier, and no way obnoxious to government, except for Nonconformity. On the first of May, 1685, he was at work in the fields near his own house, when Claverhouse passed, on his road from Lesmahagow, with three troops of dragoons. It is probable that information of his nonconformity had been given by Graham, who caused him to be brought from the fields to his own door. After some interrogations, Claverhouse said, ' John, go to your prayers, for you shall immediately die.' Upon which the martyr kneeled down, and poured out his heart in language so affecting, that the soldiers, hardened and depraved as they were, were moved almost to tears. He was twice interrupted in his devotions by Claverhouse ; and when he had finished, the cruel wretch ordered him to take farewell of his weeping wife and two infant children, who stood beside him. ' Now, Isabel,' said the martyr, ' the day is come of which I told you when I first proposed marriage to you.' ' Indeed, John,' she replied, ' I can willingly part with you.' ' Then,' he added, ' this is all I desired : I

have no more to do but die: I have been in case to meet death for many years.' After he had kissed his wife and children, 'wishing them all purchased and promised blessings,' Claverhouse ordered his soldiers to fire. But the prayers of the good man had made such an impression on their minds, that they decidedly refused to have any hand in his death. Irritated at the delay, Claverhouse shot him dead with his own hand, regardless of the tears and entreaties of the poor man's wife; and then turning to the widow, asked her what she thought of her husband now? 'I ever thought much good of him,' she replied, 'and as much now as ever.' 'It were but justice to lay thee beside him,' rejoined the murderer. 'If ye were permitted,' said she, 'I doubt not your cruelty would go that length; but how will you answer for this morning's work?' 'To man I can be answerable,' replied the hardened villain; 'and as for God, I will take him in mine own hand!' and immediately rode off. The poor woman then laid her infant on the ground, gathered together the scattered brains of her beloved husband, bound up his head, covered his body with the plaid, and sat down and wept over him! Say, reader, what must be the feelings of an historian who can attempt to eulogize such a man as Claverhouse!?"*

But there was a body of the national church of Scotland, that took up arms, and at length defied the government, denouncing it as "unlawful," and declaring that the king, by his illegal oppressions, had forfeited his crown: these were Cameronians and Cargillists, from Cameron and Cargill, two famous ministers among them. Their principles and conduct are exhibited, with singular justice, in a sermon by Dr. Samuel Charteris, a minister of the church of England. In his first centenary "Discourse on the Revolution," preached at Wilton in 1788, after giving a brief view of the dreadful sufferings of pious men under Charles II., he says, "The principle of self-defence again was roused. 'The powers that were' had not only withdrawn protection, but in effect levied war against conscientious worshippers. Their meeting for worship in the fields was construed treason. Death was denounced against

* History of the Covenanters in Scotland, Vol. II., p. 256—258.

the preacher, and a price was set upon his head. It was matter of sport to the insolent and savage soldiery, to search them out, and to hunt them down. They at last assembled for worship with arms in their hands, to repel those insolent and rude attacks, to defend their own religious liberty, and to protect those ministers who put their lives in their hands, to serve them in the ministry of the gospel. Their resistance overawed the soldiers, and afforded a temporary protection to their worshipping assemblies. Though few in number, they lifted up the fallen standard of religious liberty, and generously devoted themselves. They would swear no oaths, subscribe no bonds, take no test, nor yield to any imposition on conscience. These they accounted ‘snares and nets to catch men, and cast them down from their excellency ;’ for what is the excellency of a man but uprightness ? They would not pray for the king, because that might be construed as owning a title which, in their judgment, he had forfeited ; and they resolved, whatever it might cost, to be ingenuous and open, decisive and unembarrassed, both in word and in deed. If in some instances they ran to extremes, Solomon’s saying will be remembered, ‘ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad.’ Notwithstanding their errors, the cause of liberty was greatly indebted to their exertions. Their standard on the mountains of Scotland indicated to the vigilant eye of William, that the nation was ripening for a change. They expressed what others thought, uttering the indignation and the groans of a spirited and oppressed people. While lord Russel and Sidney, and other enlightened patriots in England, were plotting against Charles, from a conviction that his right was forfeited ; the Cameronians in Scotland, under the same conviction, had the courage to declare war against him. Both the plotters and the warriors fell, but their blood watered the plant of renown, and succeeding ages have eaten the pleasant fruit.”

SECTION VI.—WILLIAM AND MARY.

Persecution suppressed—William consults principal Carstairs—Church of Scotland restored.

INJURED Scotland, immediately on the accession of William and Mary to the throne, engaged their enlightened minds to adopt for it a sound and Christian policy. Through their prompt interference, persecution was arrested in its wasting progress, and measures were taken to restore the nation to rest and peace.

Taking the advice of some judicious persons, and especially of principal Carstairs, according to the wishes of William and Mary with the bulk of the Scotch nation, it was enacted in June, 1689, “That prelacy, and all superiority of any office in the church of this kingdom (Scotland) above presbyters, should be abolished; that certain acts, establishing episcopacy, should be rescinded; and that their majesties, with the advice and consent of the estates, should settle by law that church government in the kingdom, which was most agreeable to the inclinations of the people.”

The church of Scotland was now restored in its Presbyterian form of government. The Westminster Confession of Faith was adopted as the standard of orthodoxy in doctrine, and religion soon began again to flourish in the land. As a wise and effectual auxiliary to religion, parochial schools for the young were established in 1692, by act of parliament; from which, and from the faithful labours of the pastors, the Scotch have become proverbial for their intelligence, sobriety, and piety.

CHAPTER VI.

IRELAND.

Ulster colonized by Presbyterians from Scotland, and Puritans from England—Wise and moderate conduct of archbishop Usher—Discountenanced by archbishop Laud—His intolerant policy—Its pernicious influences—Irish massacre—Memoir of Usher—Of bishop Bedell.

THE progress of real religion in Ireland, during the seventeenth century, was not remarkably great; yet there were sown the seeds of truth in different parts, by which fruit was brought forth to life everlasting.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the northern province of Ulster was colonized with Protestants, by the exertions of the London citizens, principally Puritans. They purchased large tracts of land for the purpose, and invited over great numbers of the Scotch, who were glad to find an asylum there from persecution in their own country. With these were united many of the oppressed Puritans from England. Their ministers were chiefly Presbyterians, and their churches were formed after their plan of discipline, though they were ordained by the episcopal bishops, the objectionable parts of the service being omitted, for others of their own choice. They held their monthly meetings for prayer and conference, to promote the advancement of piety and the extirpation of popery. They held also their quarterly communions, by which means fraternal union was cherished among the Protestants, many of the native Irish were civilized, and not a few became serious Christians.

To perpetuate this good work, several judicious and moderate measures were adopted. The Protestant doctrine being established, articles of religion were thought desirable; and the ministers having drawn up a Confession of Faith, the draught was referred to the excellent and learned Dr. Usher, under whose direction it passed the houses of convocation and parliament, and was ratified by the lord lieutenant in the keeper's name. The articles were worded as suggested by the Puritans at the Hampton-Court conference, so as to compromise

the difference between the church of England and that body. There seemed to be a comprehension between the two parties, by the countenance and approbation of Dr. Usher, who was now made archbishop of Armagh. He encouraged the ministers in every good work ; and in their mutual exchange of religious services, officiating for each other in their different places of worship, they advanced the cause of God and truth.

Moderation and liberality like this, in relation to the forms of religion, were not likely to be approved by the ruling clergy in England. The clerical dignitaries at court were exceedingly displeased with archbishop Usher and his puritanic measures. They knew that the Reformation in Ireland was built upon a Puritan foundation, though episcopacy was established by law ; and for this reason, when Laud attained to power, in the intolerant spirit of that haughty priest, he contrived that the articles should be cancelled, and those of the church of England be sent in their place. Thus the pious harmony of the church of Christ in Ireland was broken ; the Protestants were divided and weakened, popery increased, and the dreadful massacre of 1641 was principally the consequence. We must here add a brief history of the “ Irish Massacre.”

In Ireland, the papists cherished their uniform hatred to scriptural knowledge ; but the well-directed zeal of the truly Christian and catholic archbishop Usher strengthened the interests of Protestantism for a long time, by the encouragement he afforded to ministers of piety and talents, without binding them down to the strict observance of trifling ceremonies. But Laud’s zeal for a superficial uniformity originated his innovations, in 1634, and produced a division which checked, and almost paralyzed, the services of active and pious ministers ; and the people were oppressed by various prelatrical exactions.

With heart-felt satisfaction, the papists saw their chief opponents silenced and weakened ; and, maturing their plans,—especially as Charles I. had procured about ten thousand Catholics to be organized as an army to be brought over to England, to assist him against the parliament,—they seized

the opportunity, and attempted, by means of these armed papists, to cut off all the Protestants in Ireland at one blow!

This massacre began October 23rd, 1641. The Protestants were hunted in all directions ; and many suppose, that no less than one hundred and fifty thousand were destroyed upon this occasion, and by every species of brutal cruelty !

Before we dismiss the subject of Ireland, it will be necessary to take some further notice of archbishop Usher, and of bishop Bedell ; two eminent men of God, and as laboriously useful as they were eminent.

James Usher was the first student in the Protestant university of Dublin ; and in that university he was a popular preacher early in the seventeenth century. In 1620, he was made bishop of Meath ; and in five years after, archbishop of Armagh. He was uncommonly diligent in study, and of extraordinary learning ; and equally remarkable for his piety and Christian moderation, by which he rendered essential service to the cause of religion, conducting himself wisely and temperately towards both the English and Scotch Puritans in his province. His usefulness, however, was seriously impeded by Laud's subverting the Irish church, by his forcing their adoption of the new articles. He came to England a short time before the rebellion ; and the massacre, with its consequences, precluded his return. Usher died in 1655, in England.

Dr. Bedell also deserves the most honourable mention, as a Christian and a minister of no ordinary virtues. In 1629, he obtained the bishopric of Kilmore : he applied himself vigorously to reform the church from the shocking abuses and disorders that existed in his diocese, and treated the papists with Christian mildness. After he had attained the age of sixty, he learned the Irish language, into which he translated the Common Prayers, which were read in the cathedral every Sunday. The New Testament having been translated into the Irish by archbishop Daniel, Bedell procured a translation of the Old Testament, an edition of which was printed at the expense of the generous and truly honourable Robert Boyle. When the dreadful rebellion of 1641 broke out, in which the Protestants were massacred, his was the only house in Cavan

that was not violated. The bishop, affording shelter to many Protestants at that time, was seized, and imprisoned in a castle for three weeks: but from respect to his virtues, he was not put in chains. He died in 1642, aged seventy-two years. The Irish did him unusual honours at his funeral; the rebel chiefs, assembling their forces, and accompanying the procession to the church-yard, fired a volley at the interment; at which even a Romish priest is said to have uttered these words, “*Requiescat in pace, ultimus Anglorum.*”—“Let him rest in peace, he is the last of the English.”

CHAPTER VII.—AMERICA.

SECTION I.

Southern continent of America ruined by popery—Northern continent colonized by English Dissenters—New England—Successive emigrations during Laud's persecutions—Number of emigrants in twelve years.

AMERICA, in every point of view, cannot fail to be most interesting to the Christian. Though a “new world,” the church of God has flourished in it in a degree far greater than in any country upon earth.

The southern continent of America was colonized by Spain and Portugal, during the sixteenth century: but the original population was mostly destroyed by the brutal oppressions of the colonists, aided by the terrible operations of the popish Inquisition. The forms of religion were retained by the Spanish and Portuguese settlers; but learning and scriptural knowledge had scarcely any existence; and the fine countries of that extensive region are still overspread with ignorance, superstition, and misery, under a jealous popish priesthood. Popery, in all its characteristic forms, holds the wretched inhabitants in mental and moral darkness; though various efforts have been made to promote education among the people, and to circulate the Word of God.

The northern continent was discovered in the commencement of the seventeenth century, and called North Virginia: but no European settled there till 1608. At this period, the

persecutions which the Puritans endured, drove multitudes of them to the Continent, particularly to Holland. Among these were the celebrated Henry Ainsworth, famous for his Hebrew learning ; John Canne, author of the marginal references to the Bible, and John Robinson. They were Independents in their views of church order ; and a considerable church of that form existed and flourished among the English exiles. In a foreign country they were perplexed with many inconveniences, among a people of different language and manners. It was resolved, therefore, after prayer-meetings for the Divine direction, that the younger part of Mr. Robinson's congregation should remove to America, under the crown of England ; that so they might enjoy the liberty and purity of religion, and be capable of encouraging their persecuted friends and countrymen.

They obtained from the government of England a patent for a settlement, and observed a day of fasting and prayer, when the venerable Mr. Robinson addressed to them an affectionate exhortation. He, with his elders, accompanied them to the port, where they spent the night in prayer ; and, to the number of one hundred and twenty, with their minister Mr. Brewster, they embarked for America, July 2, 1620. They landed at Cape Cod, and called their settlement New Plymouth. Hardships of the most distressing kind they were necessitated to suffer during the first winter, by which their number was reduced to about sixty sickly persons : but as the spring returned, they recovered ; and receiving supplies from their friends in England, they thus laid the foundation of "New England," the noblest settlement of America, and a secure asylum for the oppressed servants of Christ.

Feeble as was this colony at first, it rapidly increased, by the successive emigrations of the oppressed Puritans. For Charles I., pursuing the same course of policy as his bigoted father had done, employed some of the most worthless of men as his ministers ; at the head of whom was the unprincipled Villiers, duke of Buckingham, with archbishop Laud. Lord Clarendon declares, that the attorney-general Noy, and all the judges, were a scandal to their profession. The king's proclamations were established for laws, and the council table, the

Star Chamber, and the High Commission Court, carried on the chief business of the nation, instead of the legal courts. By such means, some of the Puritan ministers were silenced and deprived every week, and their families reduced to distress; and as there appeared no prospect of relief, but rather the approach of a violent storm, they projected a further settlement in New England. Several of the Puritan nobles, disgusted with the unlawful and oppressive proceedings of the court, engaged in this design, and obtained a charter, May 4, 1628-9, constituting a body corporate and politic, by the name of Massachussetts Bay.

The new planters being all Puritans, engaged Mr. Higgison and Mr. Skelton, two silenced ministers, to be their chaplains, who, with several of their friends, united to strengthen the colony. The little fleet that went upon this expedition consisted of six sail of transports, of from four to twenty guns, with about three hundred and fifty passengers, men, women, and children. They carried with them one hundred and fifteen head of cattle, as horses, mares, cows, &c., and forty-one goats; six pieces of cannon for a fort, with muskets, pikes, drums, colours, and a large quantity of ammunition and provision. They arrived in New England, June 24, 1629, and called their new settlement Salem, the Hebrew word signifying “Peace.”

As the chief motive for their retreating to those foreign wilds was to enjoy the privileges of pure religion, their earliest attentions were paid to its sacred ordinances: accordingly, the sixth of August was appointed as a day of fasting and prayer, and a church was formed under Mr. Higgison, each one making a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and declaring their determination to walk through life according to his gospel, agreeably to a covenant drawn up by their pastor.

The persecutions under Laud continuing in England, the colony was recruited next year, by the arrival of two hundred persons, ministers, gentlemen, and others, thus driven out from their native homes. On leaving their country, they published an address, requesting the prayers of their brethren and friends, and promising, “so far as God shall enable us, to give him no

rest on your behalf, wishing our heads and hearts may be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness."

By such various accessions, the New England colonies were greatly augmented, both in numbers and wealth, as well as piety: for when it appeared that the planters could subsist in their new settlements, great numbers of their friends, with their families, flocked after them every summer.

Remarkably singular was the circumstance mentioned of Oliver Cromwell being prevented by Charles I. from retiring to America. In 1638, there were eight sail of ships at one time in the river Thames, bound for New England, and filled with Puritan families; among whom were Oliver Cromwell, afterwards the lord protector of the Commonwealth of England, the famous John Hampden, and Arthur Haselrigge; who, seeing no termination to the oppressions of their native country, determined to spend their days in America: but the council being informed of their design, issued an order dated May 1, 1638, to detain those ships, and to bring their provisions on shore. And, to prevent the like for the future, his majesty prohibited all masters and owners of ships to set forth any vessels for New England with passengers, without special license from the privy council: this remarkable reason is assigned for the order, "Because the people of New England are factious and unworthy of any support from hence, in regard of the great disorders and want of government among them, whereby many that have been well affected to the church of England have been prejudiced in their estates by them." The truth of the case was, crowds were hastening their escape from prelatical tyranny, to the manifest loss of the country, and New England was too far from the reach of the Star Chamber.

During the twelve years of Laud's administration, there went over from England about four thousand Dissenters, to settle as planters, and laid the foundation of several towns and villages, having carried with them, in materials, money, and cattle, an amount of property equal to about £200,000, besides the merchandise intended for traffic with the Indians. It has been computed, that from the commencement of the

colony in 1620, to the year 1640, no less than twenty-one thousand two hundred British subjects settled in the four provinces of New England, viz., New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, and Connecticut; and they had drained England of four or five hundred thousand pounds, which was a vast sum in those days.

SECTION II.—AMERICA.

Strictness of the colonists—Religion flourishes—Character of their ministers—Harvard college founded by John Harvard for the education of ministers—Testimony of Dr. Mosheim.

THE New England emigrants maintained their religious peculiarities with a degree of strictness which led them to repeated acts of uncharitableness, and even cruelty, towards each other, when any alterations from the first platform were proposed. This occasioned the formation of many new churches, each independent of the others, having their own respective pastoral bishops, chosen by themselves. Many attempts were made, by the government at home, to compel them to a conformity with the church of England, and to adopt the episcopal prelacy, but all in vain; and though other denominations existed, they were almost wholly Congregational Independents.

Genuine scriptural religion in the New England States flourished exceedingly: it appeared incorporated even with their common transactions; and it is evident that no people, in their times, as a body, were more eminently devoted to God. The first colonists were intelligent men, and they entered upon all their undertakings in the fear of God. A well-informed writer of their history says, “I have before me a list of seventy-seven divines, who became pastors of sundry little churches and congregations in that country, before the year 1640, all of whom were in orders in the church of England. And I must say, though they were not all of the first rank for deep and extensive learning, yet they had a better share of it than most of the neighbouring clergy; and, which is of more consequence,

they were men of strict sobriety and virtue; plain, affectionate, serious preachers, exactly conformable in sentiment to the doctrinal articles of the church of England, and took a great deal of pains to promote Christian knowledge in their parishes. Among these divines were Mr. Cotton, ancestor of the famous Dr. Cotton Mather; Mr. Edwards, ancestor of the great president Edwards; Harvard, Shepherd, Hooker, Higginson, Mather, Newman, Rogers, Bulkeley, Chauncey, Davenport, Elliot, Stoddard, &c., men of note in their generation."

Cut off from the universities of England, these good men were concerned for the church, that it might be supplied with a succession of learned men; and in 1636 a college was founded by the Rev. John Harvard, a Congregational minister, who left £800 and his library to it. Donations of books were sent from England; and, among the donors, the learned and excellent prelate archbishop Usher deserves remembrance. In 1650 it received its charter, and it is now denominated a university. It is situated in the state of Massachussetts, four miles from the city of Boston. Harvard university is the chief literary institution in the whole of America; and though its library is not to be compared with the collections of books at the universities in Europe, it is respectable, and its benefits have been incalculable to the churches.

New England being colonized in the manner we have seen, it might be expected to prosper; and such has been the case.

The posterity of these emigrants form, at this day, by far the most moral, industrious, sober, religious, and enlightened portion of the American population.

Emancipated from intolerant bigotry, and enjoying religious freedom, these Dissenters from the national forms made various efforts to evangelize the American Indians. In this respect their zealous labours redound to their everlasting honour; and their fame in this particular was spread throughout the churches of Christ in Europe. The church historian, Dr. Mosheim, speaks of them in a manner very remarkable; and which, on account of its truth, and the accuracy of its statements, we will give in his own words. He says, "The cause of Christianity was promoted with more wisdom, and consequently with better success, in those parts of America where the English formed

settlements during this century ; and though it had the greatest ignorance, stupidity, and indolence to conquer, made, in a little time, a considerable progress. The English Independents, who retired to America on account of their dissention from the established religion of their country, claimed the honour of carrying thither the first rays of Divine truth, and of beginning a work that has since continued with such pious zeal and such abundant fruit ; and, indeed, their claim is founded in justice.

“ Several families of this sect, that had been settled in Holland, removed thence into America, in the year 1620, in order, as they alleged, to transmit their doctrine undefiled to future ages ; there they laid the foundation of a new state. The success that attended this first emigration engaged great numbers of the people called Puritans, who groaned under the oppression of the bishops, and the severity of a court by which this oppression was authorized, to follow the fortunes of these religious adventurers ; and this produced a second emigration in the year 1629.

“ They could make but little progress at first in instructing the Indians ; but the new comers, among whom the Puritans Mayhew, Sheppard, and Eliot, made an eminent figure, had the leisure, courage, and tranquillity of mind, that were necessary to the execution of such an important and arduous undertaking. All these devout exiles were remarkably zealous, laborious, and successful, in the conversion of the Indians ; but none acquired such a shining reputation, in this pious career, as John Eliot, who learned their language, into which he translated the Bible and other instructive and edifying books,—gathered together the wandering savages, and formed them into regular congregations, instructed them in a manner suited to the dulness of their comprehension, and the measure of their respective capacities ; and by such eminent displays of his zeal, dexterity, and indefatigable industry, merited, after his death, the honourable title of “ The Apostle of the Indians.

“ The unexampled success that attended these pious attempts towards the propagation of Christian knowledge, drew the attention of the parliament and people of England ; and the further advancement of this good cause appeared an object of

sufficient importance to employ the deliberations, and to claim the protection, of the great council of the nation. Thus was formed that illustrious society which derives its title from the great purpose of its institution, viz., “The Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.”*

SECTION III.—AMERICA.

Eliot, Apostle of the Indians—His labours—Translates the Scriptures for the Indians—Number of Christian Indians—The Mayhews.

In this place it may be thought due to the memory of so distinguished a servant of Christ, to give a brief sketch of the history of Eliot, the “Apostle of the Indians,” and to notice some of his successes in his missionary labours.

John Eliot was born in England, and received his education at the university of Cambridge. Reflecting upon what he considered the corruptions of the church of England, and upon the cruelties exercised by king Charles I. and the ruling clergy, he could not satisfy his conscience to exercise his ministry as a Conformist, and resolved to retire to the continent of America. He arrived at Boston in 1631, being twenty-seven years of age; and having engaged with a number of Christian families to become their pastor, if they should pass over to America, they having emigrated and built Roxburgh, he married a pious young lady from his own country, and entered upon his pastoral labours among them in the following year. With his excellent wife he lived and “walked with God,” for more than fifty years. She was a woman of distinguished piety and usefulness, “a crown to her husband,” a treasure to her family, and a blessing to her neighbourhood. When she died, her venerable husband, who seldom shed a tear, weeping over her coffin, before a vast concourse of people, exclaimed, “Here lies my dear, faithful, pious, prudent, prayerful wife : I shall go to her, and she not return to me.”

Eliot did not at first commence his labours among the

* Mosheim, Vol. V., p. 47—49.

Indians ; nor was he the first to enter upon the ministry of the gospel among them. Some attention was paid to their spiritual interests by the earliest colonists, especially by Thomas, son of governor Mayhew ; but little was effected in their conversion before 1644. Two years after, the general court of Massachusetts passed an Act, encouraging the propagation of the gospel among them ; by which the purposes of Mr. Eliot respecting the Indians were confirmed. He learned their language ; he translated the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and many passages of Scripture ; and, having assembled them in different congregations, he preached to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. Ministers and magistrates sometimes accompanied him in his tours, to be eye-witnesses of the things which were reported to them. Several “towns of praying Indians” were founded ; habits of domestic and civil order were produced in them, native ministers were raised up to carry on the blessed work, for which Mr. Eliot translated the whole Scriptures, and several standard theological works. This truly apostolic man persevered in his missionary labours, during a period of forty-four years, under appalling difficulties, and died at the age of eighty-six years, in 1690, greatly esteemed as an extraordinary character while he lived, and his death was universally lamented.

The manner of the death of this good man is worthy of notice : it corresponded with his devoted life. He discoursed much on the coming of Christ, and observing his colleague in the office of pastor come to visit him, he said, “ Brother, thou art welcome to my very soul. Pray retire to thy study for me, and give me leave to be gone.” On being asked how he did, he answered, “ Alas ! I have lost every thing : my understanding leaves me,—my memory fails me,—my utterance fails me ; but, I thank God, my charity holds out still. I find that rather grows than fails.” Referring to the object which lay so near his heart, the propagation of the gospel among the Indians, he said, “ The Lord revive and prosper that work, and grant that it may live when I am dead. It is a work I have been doing much and long about. But what was the word I spoke last ? I recal that word, ‘ My doings.’ Alas ! they have been poor, and small, and lean doings ; and I will be the man that will

cast the first stone at them all." His last words in dying were, " Welcome joy!"

Translating the Scriptures was a great work, and it has been a subject of wonder how he could accomplish it; but he was eminently fitted for this important undertaking, "possessing a sound and enlightened judgment, great patience of investigation, a correct philosophical taste, and an extensive critical knowledge of the Hebrew, Greek, and Indian languages; entertaining a most sacred regard to divine truth, and exercising an humble dependance on the Divine blessing. Having employed all the time he could command for several years, in making this translation, he had the happiness, in September, 1661, of seeing an edition of the New Testament, with marginal references, completed at press. It consisted of fifteen hundred copies. In about two years afterwards the Old Testament was finished, so that, before the end of 1663, the whole Scriptures were printed in the Indian language. "Behold, ye Americans," exclaims Dr. Mather, in the height of his pious rapture on account of the completion of this noble work, "Behold the greatest honour that ever you were partakers of! The Bible was printed here, at our Cambridge; and it is the only Bible that ever was printed in all America, from the very foundation of the world!"

How Mr. Eliot was enabled to devote so much time and expense to his missionary labours, and to the circulation of the Scriptures, has excited the surprise of many; but it must be remembered, that Eliot was greatly superior to the love of money. Still his own resources were totally insufficient for his expensive undertakings; but his labours and successes becoming known in England, by the constant correspondence carried on with the Puritans, application was made to the Long Parliament, and a society was incorporated to co-operate in converting the Indians to Christianity. Collections for this object were ordered to be made in all the churches through the kingdom. From this society Mr. Eliot received some remittances; by which he was enabled to procure assistance, and to print a second edition of the whole Scriptures. The truly honourable Robert Boyle, president of this society, encouraged Mr. Eliot by his correspondence, and contributed

about three hundred pounds a-year towards the circulation of the Word of God, and the promotion of Christianity, among the Indians. The churches in Boston afforded ample support to the Indian missionaries and schoolmasters, by their liberal contributions.

What number of the Indians had embraced Christianity before Mr. Eliot's death, cannot be ascertained with accuracy; but Dr. Mather, in a letter dated 1687, says, "There are six churches of baptized Indians in New England, and eighteen assemblies of catechumens! Of the Indians, there are twenty-four who are preachers of the Word of God; and besides these, there are four English ministers." A short time after the death of Mr. Eliot, the same writer in a sermon says, "In this one province, Massachusetts, the Indians have mostly embraced the Christian religion. There are, I suppose, more than thirty congregations of Indians, and more than three thousand Indians, in this one province, calling on God in Christ, and hearing his glorious Word!"

The generous and zealous missionary labours among the Indians of Mayhew and his descendants, have been commended as unexampled; and certainly they are deserving of all honour by the church, as blessings to America and to mankind.

Thomas Mayhew, senior, was a merchant, one of the earliest colonists. In 1641, he obtained a grant of Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and Elizabeth Isles. In the following year, he placed his son Thomas, with a few English people, in Martha's Vineyard; and he, being a young man of liberal education, excellent talents, and eminent piety, was invited by the settlers to become their minister. He devoted himself to their service in the gospel, not neglecting the Indians. He acquired a knowledge of their language, and laboured, with singular success, for their conversion to Jesus Christ. In his labours among the Indians he persevered till 1657, when, considering there were many hundreds of them, both men and women, formed into Christian societies, of such as adorned the gospel by a holy life, he resolved to visit England, to solicit the assistance of labourers in his work. The ship in which he sailed was lost on the passage; by which inscrutable dispensation of Providence, one of the most affectionate, humble, and diligent

ministers of Christ, was removed from a station of usefulness on earth to his seat in celestial glory !

Mr. Eliot was much affected at the removal of this devoted labourer among the Indians, and said, “The Lord hath given us this amazing blow, to take away my brother Mayhew. His father does endeavour to uphold the work, whom, by letters, I have endeavoured to encourage.” His venerable father, the worshipful governor Mayhew, being unable to obtain an English minister for the Indians, laying aside the ceremonies of rank, resolved to use his own talents, personally to help forward the work of God among them. Though above seventy years of age, he laboured to perfect himself in their language ; which, having accomplished, he directed his labours to many, even at the distance of twenty miles.

The success of this venerable man corresponded with his efforts, and he prosecuted his grand object, with singular zeal, till 1681, when he died in the ninety-third year of his age, sincerely lamented both by Indians and English. Previously to his death, his grandson John, youngest son of Thomas Mayhew, junior, had been settled as pastor of English families ; but he became a zealous preacher to the Indians on the death of his grandfather. He died in 1689, at the age of thirty-seven. In 1694, his son, Mr. Experience Mayhew, succeeded him, and laboured among them sixty-three years : he died in 1758, aged eighty-four years. His son Zechariah entered into his father’s labours, and died in 1806, at the age of eighty-eight.

The Mayhews were all esteemed for their unaffected piety, holy zeal, and distinguished ministerial qualifications. Mr. Experience Mayhew published a volume entitled, “ Indian Converts,” which contained an account of thirty godly ministers, thirty-seven other good men, thirty-nine religious women, and twenty-two pious children.

SECTION IV.—AMERICA.

Middle States—Colonized by various bodies of Dissenters—William Penn, the Quaker.

NORTH AMERICA, affording a secure asylum to those who were persecuted for their rejection of human impositions in matters of religion, became colonized extensively towards the close of the seventeenth century. In the middle States, many churches of pious Presbyterians were founded, great numbers flocking from Germany and Holland, as well as Scotland and England. But the life and power of religion appear to have flourished in the greatest degree in Pennsylvania, under the influence of the celebrated Quaker, William Penn. This province was granted to the son, as a compensation for the public services of the father, admiral Sir William Penn, and in payment of debts owing to him by the British government.

William Penn, the Quaker, was educated at Oxford; but expelled the university on account of his religious exercises. On account of his seriousness in religion, his father turned him out of doors, and he at length became an eminent preacher among the Quakers. He endured a long succession of bitter persecutions, and many imprisonments; but on his several trials he was always acquitted; and to his virtuous independence of mind and conduct, English liberties are under great obligations. The purity of his life was equal and correspondent with his unconquerable zeal. When Pennsylvania was granted to him, in 1681, he drew up for it a constitution and form of government, which at that time, and ever since, has excited the admiration of the world.

Though granted by the English government, Penn would not take possession of the country until he had purchased it from the native chiefs. For that purpose, therefore, he assembled them, and paid them to their entire satisfaction, in clothes, tools, and various useful articles. By this, and other similar noble acts, an extraordinary affection was produced in the Indians towards Penn and for his people, to whom they never offered the slightest violence. Penn was soon followed by

multitudes of the persecuted Quakers and others, who were glad to escape from the miseries of intolerant bigotry in their native land, to settle in his province on the liberal terms which he proposed to them, with full liberty of conscience under any form of religion.

William Penn died in 1718, leaving behind him a most enviable character, as one of the most wise and pious, benevolent and virtuous, amongst the sons of men, in any age or nation.

CHAPTER VIII.—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Societies for Popish missions—Legions of missionaries—Jesuits in Europe—Gustavus Vasa, the pillar of Protestantism on the Continent—Arts of the Jesuits.

WITNESSING the continuance and progress of the reformed faith, the rulers of the Roman Catholic church were inflamed with indignation. They both hated and dreaded scriptural religion, yet it prevailed.

In 1622, Pope Gregory V. founded at Rome the famous “Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.” It was a kind of society consisting of thirteen cardinals, two priests, one monk, and a secretary; and their object was to propagate and maintain the Romish system of religion in all parts of the world. Its riches were so prodigiously augmented by the munificence of Pope Urban VIII., and the liberality of an incredible number of donors, that its funds were adequate to the most expensive undertakings. Attached to this institution was a seminary, established in 1627, for the purpose of educating suitable agents for the object contemplated: it was called “The College for the Propagation of the Faith.”

Another establishment of the same kind was formed in France, in 1663, called “The Congregation of Priests of Foreign Missions,” to which was added, “The Parisian Seminary for the Missions;” besides “The Congregation of the Holy Sacrament,” whose object was to prepare missionaries for foreign labours.

From these “Congregations,” legions of popish priests were sent forth into every quarter of the earth, and they succeeded in converting to the profession of Christianity, if not to its spirit and temper, multitudes of persons in the fiercest and most barbarous nations. Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Capuchins, embarked in the work; each sect bitterly reproaching the other of corrupting Christianity to serve their own ambitious purposes.

Incredible were the efforts of the Jesuits throughout Europe; endeavouring, with the most consummate and insinuating subtlety, to weaken the Protestant princes, by producing divisions among them and their subjects; and but for the invincible courage, and the extraordinary martial skill, of Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, so far as human power was concerned, the whole Continent would have been overwhelmed by the ambition of Austria, and the rulers of the Romish church.

Gustavus fell in the height of victory; but for thirty years his generals maintained the superiority of their arms against the emperor, until the peace of Westphalia in 1645, when the Protestant interests were secured. Mortified at seeing their prey escape, the popish rulers employed every art to seduce the great, and in several instances the Jesuits were successful in drawing over princes to the Romish communion. Christiana, the licentious queen of Sweden, abandoned her country, and died at Rome a papist. A marquis of Brandenburg, a count Palatine, a duke of Brunswick, and a king of Poland, with several men of learning, were among their converts.

But the spirit of popery was seen in its genuine character and influence, in the diabolical machinations which produced the barbarous persecutions, and the brutal murders, to which we have briefly referred, in reviewing the history of the church in Bohemia, France, and Ireland!

CHAPTER IX.—EASTERN CHURCHES.

Eastern churches degraded by the Mohammedan power—Malabar Christians—Jesuit Missionaries—Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople—Greek church in Russia—Raskolniki, or Dissenters.

MUHAMMEDAN despots ruled most of the countries in which the several branches of the eastern church were found. But in the seventeenth century these were, almost without exception, “degraded in character, disfigured by superstition, grovelling in ignorance, and pining in poverty.”

Probably, however, many genuine Christians lived by faith in Christ, and in hope of glory, in southern India. For Dr. Buchannan remarks, “When the Portuguese first arrived in India, they were surprised to find a hundred Christian churches on the coast of Malabar. But when they had become acquainted with the purity and simplicity of their doctrine, they were offended. Mar Joseph was the bishop, who filled the Hindoo see of Malabar at that period. The Portuguese used every art to persuade him to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope, but in vain. He was a man of singular piety and fortitude, and declaimed, with great energy, against the errors of the Romish church. But when the power of the Portuguese became sufficient for their purpose, they invaded his bishopric, and sent the bishop bound to Lisbon. A synod was convened at Diamper in Malabar, on the 26th of June, 1599, at which one hundred and fifty of the clergy of his diocese appeared. They were accused of the following opinions, which were, by their adversaries, accounted heretical: that they had married wives; that they owned but two sacraments—Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper; that they denied transubstantiation; that they neither invoked saints, nor believed in purgatory; and that they had no other orders or names of dignity in the church than bishop and deacon.”* They pretended conformity with the Romish church, but in 1653 they separated.

Jesuit missionaries from Rome were employed, notwithstanding their poverty, among the Nestorian, Armenian,

* Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, p. 57, 58.

Syrian, Abyssinian, and Coptic churches, of whose circumstances we know but little ; yet, as they were almost totally destitute of the Holy Scriptures, we have every reason to fear that their Christianity was but little besides the name.

Among those who most decidedly rejected the temptation of the Jesuits, Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople, must not be forgotten. He was a man of extensive learning, and of great knowledge of the world : he had studied at Padua, and had travelled through great part of Europe, making his observations on the constitution, doctrines, and ceremonies, of the Romish and Protestant churches. Cyril was made patriarch of Alexandria, and afterwards of Constantinople, and applied himself to the work of reformation in his own communion ; purposing to render the doctrines and ceremonies of it more conformable to the simplicity of the Scriptures, and similar to the church as in Holland and England, corresponding, at the same time, with several Protestant divines.

This purpose the prelate openly declared ; by which he incensed against him the crafty Jesuits. These, having succeeded in gaining a party of perfidious Greeks, headed by Cyril, bishop of Berea, carried on a system of persecution against the good man, rendered him suspected by the Turks, through the influence of the French ambassador at the Porte ; and, by means of false witnesses, on the charge of treason, he was unrighteously condemned and strangled in 1638, by order of the grand seignior ! He was succeeded in the dignity of patriarch by his persecutor, Cyril of Berea, who for his crimes was put to death in the manner of his predecessor !

Russia, in this century, was sunk in barbarism ; yet the greater part of the population were denominated Christians of the Greek church. They were independent of the patriarchate of Constantinople, governed by their own laws ; but they were grossly ignorant and superstitious. About the year 1666, there arose a sect in the Russian church, assuming the name of Isbraniki, a word signifying the “ Multitude of the Elect :” but their adversaries called them “ Raskolniki,” the “ Seditious Faction.” We have but little information concerning this people ; except that they professed extraordinary piety and devotion, and alleged, in justification of their separation from

the hierarchy, the corruptions introduced into the ancient religion of the Russians, and the negligence and ambition of the prelates. As in all such cases we should receive the testimony of their enemies with considerable caution, so we should hesitate to admit all the accusations which the dominant clergy brought against them. Great pains were taken to reclaim these Puritans, but in vain; “arguments, promises, threatenings, dragoonings, the authority of synods and councils, seconded by racks and gibbets; in a word, all the methods that artifice or barbarity could suggest were practised to bring back these seditious heretics into the bosom of the church.”

BOOK SEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

CENTURY XVIII.

Popish missionaries—Cruelties in South America—They are expelled from China—Jesuits vigilant in Europe—Some pious Catholics—Jansenists—Testimony of Dr. Haweis—Archbishop Fenelon—Father Quesnel.

PROTESTANTISM appearing to have taken such deep root in about half of the European nations, the popish rulers despaired of ever recovering their lost authority in those states. They, therefore, laboured with diligence permanently to establish their religious system on the coasts of Africa, in America, the East Indies, and in China. In South America, their success was not inconsiderable, yet in the provinces of that continent their zeal was still attended with shocking oppressions and cruelties. The people were kept in gross ignorance, and yet required to comply with every rite of the Romish system imposed by the priests, on pain of imprisonment or death! The political intrigues of the Catholics in China were carried on to such an extent, as to induce the ruling powers not only to expel them the country, but even to raze their establishments to the ground!

Watching, with a jealous eye, every step taken by the Protestant communities, the Jesuits employed an extended system of the most active vigilance in Italy, Sardinia, France, Spain, and Portugal, lest the light of truth, as contained in the Holy Scriptures, should dispel the darkness in which the people were enveloped. There were, however, a few, even among the Roman Catholics of this century, eminently distinguished for scriptural knowledge and piety; especially among the Jansenists, who manifested a remarkable attachment to the Word of God, and exhibited some rare examples of evangelical and personal religion: yet they were not sufficiently fortified with apostolic courage, so as to rise above the fear of man, and to preach the gospel with pious zeal like the reformers. But though they continued members of the church of Rome, their superior scriptural knowledge, and their intelligent piety, brought upon them the marked displeasure of the Pope and his intolerant court, to whose unchristian impositions some of them yielded a ready submission. Among those holy men, we must not omit to mention the learned "Father Quesnel," and the amiable archbishop Fenelon.

In this place we cannot forbear to notice the Jansenists: they were a sect in the Romish church, in the seventeenth century, by whom a partial revival of religion was effected among the Catholics in France. They were the followers of Dr. Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, and professor of theology in the universities of Louvain and Douay. By means of the writings of Augustine, which, it is said, he read over thirty times, he became deeply acquainted with many parts of evangelical truth; and having opposed the pernicious principle of the Jesuits, in a treatise concerning "Grace," which he called "Augustinus," he drew upon him from that body a host of enemies. The controversy continued between the Jansenists and their opponents for more than half a century, till the year 1705, when Pope Clement terminated it by the interposition of his pretended infallibility.

The Jansenists loudly exclaimed against the corruptions of the Romish church: they reproached the clergy with a universal corruption of manners; with an almost entire forgetfulness of the dignity of their character; and with a criminal neglect of

the duties of their vocation. They maintained that the people ought to be carefully instructed in the doctrines and precepts of Christianity; and that, for this purpose, the Scriptures and the liturgy should be offered for their perusal in the vulgar tongue. They also insisted, that true piety consisted, not in the observance of imposing, pompous rites; but in real holiness of heart, and in the reigning power of divine love.

The Jansenists have been accused of superstition and fanaticism; and, as every class of professors of Christianity, who have evinced the power of vital godliness by zealous activity in the church, have been honoured by some name of reproach, they have been denominated Rigorists.

Dr. Haweis, in his Church History, says, "I do not readily receive the accusations that papists or Protestants have objected to them, as over rigorous and fanatical in their devotion; and I will admit many things might be blameable: a tincture of popery might drive them to push monkish austeries too far, and secretly to place some merit in mortification, which they in general disclaimed; yet, with all that can be said, surely the root of the matter was in them. When I read of Jansenius, or his disciples Pascal or Quesnel, I bow before such distinguished excellencies, and confess them my brethren; shall I say, my fathers? Their principles are pure and evangelical; their morals formed upon the apostles and prophets; and their zeal to amend and convert, blessed with eminent success."*

Fenelon was descended from an ancient and illustrious family in France. From his rank, education, genius, and influence with the great, no one, as we might suppose, would be more secure from the demon of persecution. In 1689, he was appointed tutor to the dukes of Burgundy and Anjou; and in 1695, he was consecrated archbishop of Cambrai. But his popularity, as a preacher and writer, exciting the jealousy of several ambitious prelates of his brethren, they prevailed with the Pope to condemn his doctrines, particularly what he had written in defence of Madame Guion, a pious lady, but of somewhat singular and mystical notions.

* Impartial History, Vol. III., p. 46.

The meek Fenelon submitted to the censures of the Pope ; and, as it was required of him, read publicly from his pulpit the sentence of his own condemnation ; remarking, that “it did not become him to call in question the decisions of his Holiness.” Fenelon died in 1715, much lamented, but without money, and without debt.”

Nothing can more fully exhibit the amiable character of this excellent man, than the esteem in which he was held by the generals of the contending armies, which at that time ravaged Europe. His active benevolence to the sick and wounded soldiers completely charmed them. When the victorious Marlborough, Ormond, and Eugene, entered his diocese, they suffered no rude hand to injure it ; and they showed him the greatest marks of personal respect.

Among his own people, he was regarded as a common father, especially to the poor ; and he had no manner of contention with his clergy, unless it were to show them, by his own bright example, how to excel in humility and devotedness to the pastoral office.

Pasquier Quesnel was a priest belonging to a sect of the Romish church in France, called the “ Congregation of the Oratory.” He published a new translation of the Gospels ; and, after some years, the whole New Testament, accompanied with ingenious notes and pious reflections. By many who were seriously inclined, this book was perused with unusual interest ; and even the Pope himself was found reading it, expressing his admiration of it, as an extraordinary production, and his desire to patronize the author. But the Jesuits extracted from the notes a hundred and one propositions, which in 1715 they prevailed with the Pope to condemn. Accordingly, Father Quesnel was banished from Paris, thrown into a dungeon at Brussels, from which, after four months’ imprisonment, he escaped, and died in 1719, an exile in Holland.

CHAPTER II.—LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN GERMANY, DENMARK, AND PRUSSIA.

Low state of religion—Pietists—Professor Frank—Missionaries—Expulsion of Protestants from Salzburg—Moravians—Christian David—Count Zinzendorf—Danish missions to India.

RELIGION, in the Lutheran churches, was generally in a very low condition in the eighteenth century, more especially at its close; for although the Augsburg Confession of Faith continued to be their acknowledged standard of orthodoxy, the ministers were, in most instances, exceedingly speculative, worldly men, who disliked the evangelical spirituality of their subscribed creed, and inclined to the sceptical notions of deism.

The Pietists of the former century, under whose forms vital godliness had so greatly revived, had nevertheless some disciples in this; and their spiritual exercises were cherished to a considerable extent in some places, especially by that extraordinary man, professor Frank, and his worthy colleagues, Dr. Anthony and Breithaupt, in the university of Halle. This city was in the dominions of Frederick I., king of Prussia, the founder of the university. Under these eminently learned and zealous professors, the name of this new seat of learning became pre-eminent in Germany; and it is recorded, that at one time there were as many as three thousand students under their pious superintendence.

Frank, particularly, possessed uncommon talents for preaching and expounding the Scriptures, through which he was remarkably useful in the conversion of men to God; but it is impossible fully to estimate the blessed fruits of the example and ministry of these pious professors. One of the most splendid monuments of Christian benevolence that the world has ever seen was the Orphan House at Glauca, near Halle, built by Frank. This noble undertaking originated in his compassionate attentions to the poor, who every Thursday solicited alms at the door of the professor, who was pastor of the church at Glauca. On these occasions he gave them reli-

gious instructions ; and, seeing the good effects of his proceedings, he determined on establishing a permanent asylum for the wretched and helpless orphans. Finding one day in his charity box the sum of eighteen shillings and sixpence, he took it in his hand and said, " This is a considerable sum, worthy of being laid out on some important occasion. I will take this for the foundation of a charity-school !" Promptly he entered upon his noble work, in which he proceeded amidst many difficulties ; but the kind providence and blessing of God were so remarkable in favours towards that man of faith and prayer, that at his death, in 1727, the Orphan House provided for 2196 fatherless children, with their 130 preceptors !

The increase of religion in many of the Lutheran churches, in this century, must have been considerable, if we consider that there were many valuable pastors and missionaries sent forth from under the tuition of Frank and his colleagues ; but we are not able to ascertain precisely the extent of the revival of religion by their means.

But besides the local benefits by means of the labours of settled pastors, the Lutheran churches experienced a considerable increase of members about the year 1734, when the Protestants of Saltzburg, to the number of about thirty thousand, were expelled from their homes by their bigoted Roman Catholic rulers. They were scattered into different nations, many finding a refuge in Prussia, Holland, and British America, carrying with them those principles of godliness which had been tried in the fire of persecution. Thus the numerous churches, which bear the Lutheran and German name, arose among the descendants of the persecuted Puritans, who had settled in North America.

About the same period, also, arose the modern Moravians, or United Brethren, who, it is believed, have descended from a branch of the ancient Waldenses. Dr. Haweis, in his Church History, gives the following account of them : " A. D. 1722. Dispersed, distressed, reduced to the lowest ebb, overwhelmed by the persecutions of popery in Bohemia and Silesia, under the bigoted Austrians, the church of the Brethren, in the beginning of the century, had nearly disappeared, and their light seemed ready to be put out in Israel ; but few men were

left, and they of little estimation in this world ; and nowhere could they find rest or establishment. In this extremity, three or four poor families, under the spiritual superintendence of that venerable man of God, Christian David, emigrated from Moravia into Upper Lusatia, in search of some sequestered corner of the earth where, hid from popish persecution, they might worship God our Saviour in peace and purity. At the village of Berthelsdorff, belonging to the since well-known Count Zinzendorff, they met from his steward, Heitz, a hospitable reception. The count himself was at the court of Dresden ; but on being informed of the arrival of the emigrants, he gave orders to encourage them. They were assisted to build cottages for their families, and some uncultivated lands were allotted to them, which their industry soon rendered productive.”*

Count Zinzendorff himself, and his relation Baron Watteville, having been educated at the university of Halle, had very early imbibed a happy tincture of the pietism which prevailed in that seminary. The manners of the refugees, therefore, were so congenial to those of the count, as to engage his fostering affection : this drew others of the same fraternity to turn their eyes to their brethren, and to fix their dwelling with them. Thus arose a new village, Hernhuth, the cradle of the reviving church of the Moravians, whose increase has been so blessed of God, and for which the heathen especially shall praise Him, who can, as he often does, produce the greatest effects by instruments the most feeble and inadequate in appearance.

Under the patronage of count Zinzendorff and his worthy pastor Rothe, the infant colony continued to prosper, and to spread its branches through many parts of Germany, Denmark, Holland, England, and British America. The count himself, a zealous Lutheran, at first endeavoured to bring them to a conformity with the established church at Berthelsdorff ; but the brethren preferred their ancient regimen, and tenaciously held its forms. Finding himself unable to prevail with them to recede from their own mode of ecclesiastical government,

* Impartial History, Vol. III., p. 184, 185.

he, after much deliberation, agreed that they should observe the Moravian ritual, and consented, with Baron Watteville, to be appointed to the presidency of their affairs spiritual and temporal, in conjunction with the elders of the congregation as their council and associates. The count was consecrated one of their bishops in 1735, after which he laboured with indefatigable zeal till his death, in 1760, and was succeeded by another of like dignity, count Dohna.

Zinzendorff was an eminent benefactor to the United Brethren, and his memory is justly held in honour by that communion, as having been the instrument by which God restored and built up their church. Some peculiar notions are attributed to the count: but though his sentiments are not always stated with accuracy in his writings, nor with scriptural purity on all occasions, it must be allowed, that he was a man of personal, serious godliness, and Christian charity.

The United Brethren have never made any figure in principal cities; but their persevering labours in missions to the heathen nations have been remarkably blessed of God, while they have excited the admiration of all the Protestant communities, and constrained other denominations to follow their truly Christian example.

Religion appears evidently to have been enjoyed by some in a considerable degree in Denmark at the beginning of this century; as the conversion of the heathen engaged their benevolent attention. In 1705, the king, Frederick IV., excited by one of his pious chaplains, determined on a mission for the promotion of Christianity at Malabar, on the coast of Coromandel, in the East Indies. On application to the divinity professors in the university of Halle, two of the pious students, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutscho, voluntarily offered themselves for the work; and their labours at the Malabar settlements appear to have been blessed to the conversion of many of the pagans. The mission thus begun, was strengthened by a succession of other devoted men, among whom was the venerable Schwartz. After almost incredible labours, Ziegenbalg died in 1719, aged thirty-six years. When dying, he

said, “ I desire to be with Christ, which is far better. Washed from my sins in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness, I shall enter into his heavenly kingdom.”

CHAPTER III.

FRANCE.

Religion depressed—Quesnel's translation of the New Testament—Fenelon—Rollin—Masillon—Protestant churches—Knowledge increases in France—Revolution—Romish priests sacrificed.

FURIOUS popish bigotry, like a dreadful pestilence, had blighted and destroyed the rising beauties of the evangelical churches in unhappy France, during the seventeenth century. Every possible effort was still made to extinguish the light of truth. But at the commencement of the eighteenth century, there was a spirit of religious inquiry extensively prevalent in that country. This was excited principally by means of the Jansenists, whose writings, as before mentioned, were far more scriptural than those of the doctors in the Romish church in general. We have already mentioned Father Quesnel's translation of the New Testament, which, though condemned, was still read, and was probably a blessing to many ; and we have reason to believe, that the labours of the archbishop Fenelon, M. Rollin, bishop Masillon, and others, though they continued in the popish communion, were not without some fruit in the conversion of souls to God, as their writings evince a large measure of evangelical sentiment and pious zeal.

Many Protestant churches still existed in the southern parts of France in this century ; and, doubtless, their scriptural forms of worship, and their evangelical ministry, were blessed to the salvation of souls. But these communities were exceedingly depressed, and frequently persecuted, till 1787, when several privileges were granted to them by Louis XVI. These privileges, it is said, were obtained by means of the voluntary sacrifice of liberty on the part of young Fabre, to be a gally-slave for twelve years, instead of his father, who had been thus sentenced on account of his being a Protestant.

During this century knowledge extensively increased in France. This naturally led the people to discover the absurd superstitions of popery in their true character : they perceived them to be irrational ; they regarded them with universal contempt ; and, confounding that system with Christianity, the nation became almost altogether infidel. This spirit of infidelity was one of the chief causes of the Revolution in 1789 ; the brutal cruelties of which were dreadful, above almost all that are recorded on the pages of history. The popish priests, having practised such impositions upon the people, were among its first victims ; of whom it is computed, that not less than thirty-four thousand fell a sacrifice to the ungovernable fury of the revolutionists. The papal system was thus shaken to its foundation, and every form of religion was, for a time, rejected by the new government.

CHAPTER IV.

NETHERLANDS.

Orthodoxy—Arminian and Socinian doctrines—Vitringa—Religious liberty—Saurin—Mennonite Baptists.

“THE United Provinces have constantly maintained the reformed faith as their national profession ; but the love of gold has generally prevailed over the love of godliness in the multitude, and an icy coldness of devotion and dull formality discharged the public services at church ; and little family religion, or association for prayer or praise, where anywhere found.”

Though much declension from orthodoxy prevailed in this age, through the Arminian and Socinian doctrines, a considerable measure of spiritual prosperity appeared to have been possessed by some of the churches in the Netherlands, during the eighteenth century.

The justly celebrated Vitringa, who died in 1722, a man of extensive learning, and of the most exalted piety, was professor of divinity in the universities of Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden. His labours were of immense benefit to the cause of evangelical truth, especially his commentaries on several parts of the Holy Scriptures.

Although the Calvinistic system of religion was that which was recognised by the laws and adopted by the state, yet liberty of conscience was enjoyed in the United Provinces, at this period, in a greater degree than in any other country on the Continent. In this country, therefore, the persecuted Protestants of France found an asylum. Among the French refugees was the eloquent and pious Saurin, whose ministry was attended by multitudes, and it is believed his success was correspondent with his uncommon talents. His sermons, in twelve volumes, remain imperishable monuments of his learning, piety, and evangelical worth.

Thirty thousand, or one hundred and thirty churches, of the Mennonite Baptists were found in the Netherlands at the commencement of the century; but our information respecting them is not very particular. From the little that we know of them, they seem to have possessed some of the life and vigour of religion, as they were independent congregations, whose ministry depended for its support on the voluntary contributions of the people; and, consequently, they felt a more lively interest in the sacred ordinances, and the success of the preached gospel.

CHAPTER V.—ENGLAND.

SECTION I.—CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

FORMER PART OF THE CENTURY.

Decline of religion after William III.—Fifty new churches about London—Arianism—Persecuting spirit—Sacheverel—Schism bill—George I.—Low state of religion—Testimony of bishop Burnet—Of bishop Butler—Of Dr. Haweis—Of Mr. Newton.

EVANGELICAL religion greatly revived in England during the latter part of the eighteenth century. Its increase, both in the established church, and among the Dissenters, has been truly wonderful; affording an astonishing and delightful illustration of the purposes of the Divine mercy, and the wise adaptation of a faithful gospel ministry, to bless the souls of men.

The partial revival of religion, under the wise and tolerant government of William and Mary, was, in a good measure, enjoyed till after the close of his reign. Most of his able mi-

nisters were, for some years, employed by queen Anne; the pious and excellent prelates, Beveridge, Patrick, and Burnet, survived her accession several years, and during her reign an Act was passed for the erection of fifty new churches in London and its environs.

Many of the most eminent literary characters flourished in the reign of Anne; but religion began grievously to decline in the church of England, and it was seriously injured by the prevalence of the Arian doctrine, and the renewal of prelatical intolerance.

Anne ascended the throne of England in 1702, on the death of William III. She is generally called "The Good;" being a princess of amiable manners in private life, and prosperous throughout her reign, chiefly by means of the vast abilities of her ministers and military commanders.

Arianism affected the interests of religion in the church of England, by means of the writings of professor Whiston, of the university of Cambridge, and those of Dr. Samuel Clarke, rector of St. James's, Westminster, who were the most distinguished advocates of that doctrine. Their works were eagerly read, and their principles spread extensively, both among the clergy and among the graduates at the universities, exerting a withering influence upon vital godliness.

Anne was a Stuart; a daughter of James II. She inherited a large portion of the bigotry of that unhappy family; and she diffused or cherished that hateful principle to a great degree, throughout the kingdom. The spirit of persecution, which William had repressed, was revived. As a preliminary measure, the advocates of intolerance projected a law, which should subject to severe penalties those persons who, holding any office under government, or being members of corporations, should be proved to have been present, on any occasion, at a Dissenting place of worship, in time of divine service. Their attempts were defeated by the firmness of the queen's ministers, who, having been in office under William, were men of moderation. But the repose was again broken by an intemperate zealot, named Sacheverel, whom bishop Burnet characterizes as a bold, insolent man, with a very small measure of religion, virtue, learning, or good sense;" and the cry of "The church

in danger,' was sounded throughout the nation. In a sermon before the lord mayor and sheriffs of London, he censured the Revolution, and expatiated on the danger of the church, and what he called the machinations of Dissenters; and magnified the evils which, he said, were likely to arise from toleration. For his rashness, Sacheverel was impeached for misdemeanour; and, after a long and tumultuous trial, his sermons were ordered to be burnt by the public executioner, and himself to be suspended for three years.

The doctrines of Sacheverel were, however, approved by the queen; and even in the same year, on account of his pernicious high church notions, he obtained some valuable preferment in the church, by the royal patronage.

The first ministers of Anne not favouring her lofty notions, she dismissed them. In 1701 the "Schism Bill" was passed; by which Dissenters were deprived of the privilege of educating their own children! Several other projects were being formed for the further abridgement of religious liberty, and for the restoration of the Stuart family to the throne of England; but a gracious Providence averted the threatening evils, and removed the queen by death in 1714; and thus opened the way for a more worthy dynasty.

On the death of queen Anne, the throne of Great Britain was ascended by George I., one of the family of Brunswick; and he and his successors, to their immortal honour it deserves again to be recorded, have been the generous, enlightened, and steady friends of the sacred rights of conscience, as well as of civil liberty.

When George I. ascended the throne of Great Britain, vital godliness appeared to be dying and almost extinct in the church of England; while the learned employed their talents, chiefly in writing defences of Christianity against infidels and atheists. In most instances, their able treatises are destitute of the grand peculiarites of evangelical doctrine, especially the two chief points—justification by faith in the righteousness and atonement of Christ; and sanctification by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit. The state of religion in the church of England, at the close of the reign of queen Anne, as described by bishop Burnet, is most truly deplorable: he

remarks, “ During my whole life, I have lamented that I saw so little true zeal among our clergy. I saw much of it in the clergy of the church of Rome, though it is both ill directed and ill conducted. I saw much zeal also among the foreign churches, the Dissenters have a great deal among them; but I must own, the great body of our clergy has always appeared dead and lifeless to me; and instead of animating one another, they seem rather to lay one another to sleep. I have observed the clergy in all the places through which I have travelled, papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters; but of them all, our clergy is much the most remiss in their labours in private, and the least severe in their lives.” As to the Articles of the church, he says, “ The greater part subscribe them without ever examining them; and others do it because they must do it, though they can hardly satisfy their consciences about some things in them.”

Perfectly correspondent with this statement, is his description of the people: he says, “ The commonalty of this nation are much the happiest, and live the easiest and the most plentifully, of any that ever I saw. They are very sagacious and skilful in managing all their concerns, but at the same time it is not to be conceived how ignorant they are in matters of religion. The Dissenters have a much larger share of knowledge among them, than is among those that come to our churches. This is more to be wondered at, considering the plainness in which matters of religion are written in this age, and the many small books concerning these that have been published of late years, which go at easy rates, and of which many thousands are every year sent about by charitable societies in London; so that this ignorance seems too obstinate and incurable.”

Bishop Butler describes the lamentable state of religion, in the preface to his truly valuable little work, on the “ Analogy of Religion,” published in 1736. In this he confirms the testimony of bishop Burnet. He says, “ It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject for inquiry: but that it is now, at length, discovered to be fictitious; and, accordingly, they treat it as if, in the present age, this were a great point

among all people of discernment ; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule ; as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.”

Dr. Haweis, in his “ Impartial Church History,” testifies, “ Between contests for power, thirst for riches, and inordinate love of pleasure, the nation sunk down into corruption, and the church erected a feeble barrier against the fashionable pursuits. All its great preferments were bestowed to secure friends to the administration : whatever prime minister prevailed, the prelaticeal bench looked up to their creator with devotion and assiduous attention. The life and power of godliness fell to a very low standard ; and only here and there an individual cleaved to the faith once delivered to the saints, and dared to be singular. It was in this state of torpor and departure from truth and godliness, that at Oxford, one of our universities, a few, chiefly young men, began to feel the deplorable spiritual ignorance and corruption around them. They were conscious something ought to be done to revive a sense of religion in principle and practice, from the decay into which it was fallen : they were convinced that men of God, and ministers of the sanctuary, ought to lead very different lives from any thing they observed at college.”

The late Mr. Newton, an amiable and pious clergyman of London, referring to the state of religion in the church of England, at the same period, observes, “ I am not sure, that in the year 1740, there was a single parochial minister, who was publicly known as a gospel minister, in the whole kingdom.

This appears to have been the darkest period in the history of the church of England, since the days of the Reformation : but as the darkest part of the night is said just to precede the dawn of the morning, so, in secret, the Lord of his universal church was preparing some Boanerges, “ sons of thunder ;” some “ burning and shining lights,” by which, with apostolic zeal and intelligence, the lukewarm and spiritually dead might be awakened and instructed : all of which was accomplished by the ministry of Whitfield and Wesley.

SECTION II.—DISSENTERS.

FORMER PART OF THE CENTURY.

Number of churches of Dissenters—Religion among them—Arian doctrine—Efforts to revive religion—Prayer-meetings—County associations—Mr. Some—Dr. Watts—Dr. Doddridge—Writings of Dr. Watts—Matthew Henry—Consent of prayer by the churches in England, Scotland, and America—Academies for the ministry among Dissenters—Bishop Butler and archbishops Horte and Secker educated by Dissenters—Tutors of Dissenters—Commentators—Learned writers

NOTWITHSTANDING the grievous persecutions endured by the Nonconformists during the seventeenth century, they continued to increase. Being one single congregation at its commencement, in the reign of James I., the number of Dissenters had so multiplied, that at the beginning of this century there were one thousand one hundred and seven churches of them in England, two hundred and forty of whom were Baptists, besides forty-three churches in Wales! It is probable there were an equal number of Dissenters in America, so greatly had their number been augmented.

Pure scriptural religion, among the Dissenters, at this period, however, was far from being in a flourishing condition. They felt the pernicious influence of the national infidelity and immorality; and the Arian doctrine soon spread from the church of England among the Presbyterian churches, chiefly in the western counties, carrying a withering blight and a deadly power amongst its professors. But there were various and vigorous exertions made by many of the orthodox ministers, to awake and arouse the people to a sense of their danger, and to promote a revival of primitive godliness in the churches.

Circular letters were published by the London ministers, addressed to their brethren in the country, lamenting the declension, and exciting to prayer on special occasions. Weekly prayer-meetings were held by common consent throughout the kingdom, to implore the promised influences of the Holy Spirit. County associations of ministers and churches were formed, for the promotion of religion in their several districts, and monthly lectures were delivered at their stated meetings.

Several measures being taken by the queen's government

for the abridgment of their liberties, another address was published in 1702, by the ministers in London, entitled, "A Serious Call from the City to the Country, to join with them in setting apart some time, viz., from seven to eight every Tuesday morning, for the solemn seeking of God, each one in his closet, in this Critical Juncture."

Persevering prayer was heard and answered; and the evils of persecution, which had begun to operate, were averted, by means of the death of the queen, and the accession of George I. By him, ministers of moderate and enlightened principles were chosen, to give him counsel, and execute the laws; and by his recommendation the iniquitous "Schism Bill" was repealed, so that the Dissenters were again allowed to educate their children!

Means of various kinds were employed by zealous ministers for the advancement of religion in the several churches: among which it will be proper to mention a few. In 1729, Mr. Some, an intimate friend of Dr. Watts and Dr. Doddridge, delivered, before the Leicester County Association, an awakening and impressive sermon, which was printed, and widely circulated with much benefit, under the title of "The Methods to be taken by Ministers for the Revival of Religion." In the same year, Dr. Doddridge published his "Free Thoughts on the most probable Means of reviving the Dissenting Interest."

But among the great men who were remarkably honoured of God, at this period, was Dr. Watts: he was a singular blessing to the church of Christ; and to him, in the order of instrumentality, more appears justly to be attributed than to any other individual of his time. His Hymns, first published about 1707, and afterwards his version of the Psalms, were received with delight by most evangelical congregations, and they were eminently honoured by the great Head of the church, to awaken the vigour, and diffuse the sweetness, of experimental godliness; producing a complete revolution in psalmody. These were followed by his Divine and Moral Songs, and his Catechisms for Children; which, though apparently of humble origin, had no small influence upon religious parents, as well as upon their children. The pious doctor conferred no small favour upon the church of Christ by his "Evangelical Sermons

for Families," and his "Discourses on the World to Come," which was eminently useful: while his "Logic," "whose every page is piety," was taught in the university of Oxford.

The popular writings of Dr. Watts were widely circulated, not only in Great Britain and America, but in Germany and Holland. About 1730 Dr. Watts published "A Humble Attempt towards the Revival of Practical Religion," and also an impressive address to Dissenters, written upon the words of our Saviour, "What do ye more than others?" Besides which, he published several interesting pieces from the pen of professor Frank, and used his influence in various ways for the advantage of pure religion.

Matthew Henry, by his invaluable Commentary, and his other writings, deserves honourable mention, as the means of diffusing the saving knowledge of Christ, and serving the interests of his church.

In the midland counties, the exertions of Dr. Doddridge were most powerfully and beneficially felt. He educated many young men for the ministry; he projected a society for Christian missions to the heathen; and, in 1741, to arouse his brethren, he delivered, in several places, and afterwards published, his solemn discourse on the "Evil and Danger of neglecting the Souls of Men." His "Family Expositor" of the New Testament, and his work on the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," planned by Dr. Watts, and written at his request, have been incalculable blessings to the church of God.

At an early period a correspondence was carried on with the evangelical ministers in Scotland and America; by whom, in 1774, a "General Consent for Prayer," was agreed upon, to continue for two years. In answer to those united supplications, blessings were showered down upon the churches, especially in England, Scotland, and America. The religious fervour beginning thus to arise, was surprisingly augmented by means of the rising and powerful ministry of Whitfield and Wesley.

To secure a succession of learned ministers has always been a concern of deep interest with Dissenters. But as an unchristian spirit of bigotry excluded them from the endowed univer-

sities of the nation, they were driven to their own private resources, to provide against the evil arising from their circumstances. Hence, some of the two thousand ejected ministers consecrated themselves, and devoted their eminent talents, to the education of pious young men for the Christian ministry ! As these devoted men died, they were succeeded by others, many of whom were tutors of distinguished abilities ; and as they gave up their time, and directed their energies, to a very limited number, a considerable proportion of their students were enabled, by pious industry, to attain such eminence in those departments of learning necessary for their sacred office, that no nation has ever produced men of superior ministerial qualifications.

Bishop Butler, and archbishops Horte and Secker, than whom the church of England never possessed brighter ornaments, received their principal education from the tutors among Dissenters.

Altogether to omit mentioning the names of those among the Dissenters who were distinguished for learning and pastoral talents, would be most blame-worthy ; but we can notice only a few, as our limits will not allow an extended list ; besides, many of them are well known by their various and useful writings. Among the tutors of this period were Dr. Chauncey, Theophilus Gale, Dr. Ridgley, Dr. Jennings, Dr. Taylor, and Dr. Doddridge ; whose works will live to praise them, and carry down their names with honour to posterity.

Among the commentators upon the whole Bible, were Matthew Henry and Dr. Gill ; concerning the latter of whom Mr. Toplady, a learned clergyman of the church of England, said, in delineating his character, “ If any one man can be supposed to have trodden the whole circle of human learning, it is Dr. Gill.” Among the expositors of the New Testament, we must name Dr. Guyse and Dr. Doddridge, of whose writings in this department, together with the “ Synopsis Criticorum,” and “ Annotations ” of Matthew Poole, of the last century, willing testimony is borne by those of the church of England most competent to judge, that they have never been surpassed by divines of any age, or of any denomination.

The works of Dr. Lardner, on the Evidences of Christianity,

have placed him at the head of all the learned writers in that department. Dr. Paley's celebrated work on that subject is confessedly, in great part, borrowed from Lardner; and next to him, against the whole host of Deists, Dr. Leland is justly ranked. The writings of Jeremiah Jones, on the "Canon of Scripture;" the Hebrew Concordance of Dr. John Taylor, and the various productions of Dr. Watts, Moses Lowman, Dr. Chandler, Dr. Doddridge, Dr. Gill, and Benjamin Bennett, of this period, have rendered their names immortal in the church of God.

SECTION III.—METHODISTS.

Origin of the Methodists of Oxford—John and Charles Wesley—Whitfield goes to America—Whitfield begins his ministry—His popularity—Follows Wesley to America—Returns after Wesley to England—Churches refused to him—Preaches in the open air at Bristol—Wonderful success—Wesley follows his example—Their labours—Whitfield preaches at Moorfields, &c., in London—Goes again to America—Differs in opinion with Wesley—They separate—They agree in essential doctrines—Their mutual affection—Wesley's testimony to Whitfield.

THE Methodists originated with John Wesley. This distinguished man was born in 1703. He was ordained in 1725, and appointed tutor in Lincoln College, Oxford. In 1729 he was told by a serious man, "that in going to heaven, he must find companions or make them, as the Bible knows nothing solitary in religion." Mr. Wesley acted upon the maxim with his brother Charles, a student of Christ Church, and Messrs. Morgan and Kirkham, of Merton College. In 1729 they commenced a methodical consecration of their time to the spiritual exercises of religion. Hence they were called Methodists. In 1731 they were joined by Mr. Hervey and several others, and in 1734 by Mr. Whitfield. Deeply affected with the prevailing ignorance and impiety, they began their career in the city of Oxford, seeking all opportunities for diffusing religious knowledge among the poor, and the wretched inmates of the prisons.

His father dying in 1735, Mr. John Wesley was induced to accompany General Oglethorpe to the new colony of Geor-

gia, in North America, to be the minister of Savannah, and to preach the gospel to the Indians. His brother Charles, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamott, united with him, and they arrived at the Savannah River Feb. 5, 1736. There sailed with them twenty-six Moravian missionaries to Georgia, from whose Christian experience and holy temper, Mr. Wesley acknowledged that he derived unspeakable advantage.

Mr. Whitfield returned to Gloucester, his native city, where he was successful in the conversion of several young men, who united with him in pious exercises. He made frequent religious visits to the county gaol, in which he read and prayed every day with the prisoners. The fame of his piety had reached the ears of Dr. Benson, bishop of Gloucester, who sent to him, declaring that he should think it his duty to ordain him, when he chose to make the request, though he was only twenty-one years of age. After examining the Articles of the church, and studying the epistles to Timothy, he made application to the bishop, and was ordained June 30, 1736. The following Sunday, he preached his first sermon, "on the necessity and benefits of a religious society," in the church at Gloucester, in which he had been baptized.

"Curiosity," says Whitfield, "drew a large congregation together. The sight, at first, a little awed me. But I was comforted with a heart-felt sense of the Divine presence, and soon found the advantage of public speaking when a boy at school, and of exhorting and teaching the prisoners, and poor people at their private houses, whilst at the university. By these means I was kept from being daunted. As I proceeded, I perceived the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of authority. Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck; and I have since heard, that a complaint was made to the bishop, that I drove fifteen mad the first sermon. The worthy prelate wished the madness might not be forgotten before the next Sunday."

The bishop offered him a curacy, but he preferred going to Oxford, that he might prosecute his studies. Soon after he accepted an invitation to officiate at the chapel in the Tower of

London, and preached his first sermon in the metropolis in August, 1736, at Bishopsgate Church, to a deeply affected congregation. He continued two months at the Tower, where he took great pains with the soldiers, and several young men who attended his sermons.

Letters, at this time, from the Wesleys, made him desirous of visiting America; and Mr. Charles Wesley coming to England, to procure more labourers, Whitfield agreed to go; for which purpose, he waited on General Oglethorpe, who had returned to London. He did not embark till December, 1737; but in the twelve months intervening, he preached in Bristol, Bath, Gloucester, and London, being invited by the committees of various charities, on account of his popularity. The subjects of his discourses were the essential doctrines of vital Christianity; and such were his natural powers of oratory, sanctified by a pious earnestness of manner, that multitudes were drawn to hear him. The churches were crowded to excess, and thousands were unable to get admittance. He generally preached nine times every week; and, early on Sunday mornings, the people were to be seen flocking to the churches, with lanterns in their hands, and conversing on the blessings of eternal salvation.

Mr. Wesley returned to England, where he was informed that Mr. Whitfield had set sail for Georgia; and he proceeded to visit the Moravian settlement in Germany. Whitfield was well received by the magistrates, officers, and people; but he found the new colony of Georgia in the most miserable condition. Besides religious visiting, he generally preached twice a day, and four times on a Lord's-day; and, for the benefit of the Georgians, he projected, and ultimately completed, an orphan asylum, similar to that of Professor Frank, in Germany. "I was really happy," says he, "in my little foreign cure, and could have cheerfully remained among them, had I not been obliged to return to England to receive priest's orders, and to make a beginning towards laying a foundation to the orphan house."

He arrived in London, December 8, 1738, where he again enjoyed the society of his friend Mr. Wesley, and they began to form societies in different parts of London; the principal

place of meeting being in a large room which they hired in Fetter Lane. In January, 1739, he received priest's orders from his good friend, bishop Benson.

He complied with invitations to preach in London, Oxford, and Bristol ; by which thousands were awakened to a sense of religion : but the churches could not contain the crowds that followed him.

On account of his preaching the necessity of spiritual regeneration, the pulpits, in many places, were refused to him by the clergy ; and at Bristol he determined, after much reflection and prayer, to commence preaching in the open air. This practice he began among the rude and ignorant colliers at Kingswood, near Bristol, of which he writes, “ Having no righteousness of their own to renounce, they were glad to hear of a Jesus who was a friend of publicans and sinners, and ‘came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’ The first discovery of their being affected was, to see the white gutters made by their tears, which plentifully fell down their black cheeks, as they came out of their coal pits. The change was visible to all, though numbers chose to impute it to any thing rather than the finger of God.”

Besides the colliers, and thousands from the neighbouring villages, persons of all ranks flocked daily to hear him, out of Bristol ; and he was soon invited to preach by some of the better sort, in a large bowling-green, in the city itself. Such success attending his labours in field-preaching, he wrote to Mr. Wesley, who had never been at Bristol ; and as he, as well as Mr. Whitfield, had been refused the use of churches, he followed the practice of his younger friend, having the sanction of our Saviour’s example, in calling sinners to repentance both in highways and in fields.

In reference to his former prejudices on this point, Mr. Wesley says, “ Having been, till very lately, so very tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been in church.” In justification of this practice, he says, “ When I was told, I must preach no more in this, and this, and another church, so much the more those who could not hear me there flocked together when I was at any of the societies ; when I

spoke more or less to as many as the room I was in would contain. But after a time, finding those rooms would not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in England, which I had often done in a warmer climate,—to preach in the open air. And I cannot say I have ever seen a more awful sight, than when on Rose Green, or on the top of Hanham Mount, some thousands of people were joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

‘They stood, and under open air ador’d
The God who made both air, earth, heaven, and sky.’”

Mr. Wesley continued at Bristol for some months; and of his labours there, he says, “Every morning I read prayers and preached at Newgate. Every evening I expounded a portion of Scripture, at one or more of the societies. On Monday in the afternoon, I preached abroad near Bristol. On Tuesday at Bath and Two-mile-hill, alternately. On Wednesday at Baptist Mills. Every other Thursday near Pensford. Every other Friday, at Kingswood. On Saturday, in the afternoon, and Sunday mornings, in the Bowling-green. On Sunday, at eleven, at Hanham Mount; at two, at Clifton; at five, at Rose Green.”

In the mean time, Whitfield visited many of the principal towns in the kingdom, collecting for his Orphan Asylum in Georgia. In Wales, he found the power of religion reviving, through the zealous ministry of Howel Harris, with whom he co-operated. Being unable to obtain the use of churches in London, he ventured one Sunday to preach in Moorfields. Though threatened by the mob, a divine blessing evidently attended these labours; and he went the same evening to Kennington-common, about three miles from the city. For several months, Moorfields, Kennington-common, and Blackheath, about five miles from the city, were the chief scenes of his ministry, and his auditors often consisted of twenty thousand persons. It is said their singing could be heard two miles off, and the voice of the preacher at the distance of a mile.

While Mr. John Wesley continued at Bristol, his brother, Mr. Charles, was labouring in London and other places; Mr.

Ingham, in many churches in Yorkshire; Mr. Kinchin, in Oxford; and Mr. Rogers, in Bedfordshire. Thus many were brought to the faith of Christ, and societies were formed of pious believers.

The building of a school having been commenced at Bristol, Mr. Whitfield visited that city, and put Mr. Wesley in full power over the property; then introduced him at Gloucester and other places, as a field-preacher, and embarked a second time for America, in August, 1739. In that country he was received with a cordial welcome by many of the ministers, and by thousands of the people, who expressed their delight to see puritanism revived by a minister of the church of England; and Mr. Whitfield found himself at home among these descendants of the persecuted English Puritans, to whom his ministry was blessed in an extraordinary manner. Two years after he returned to England, for the purpose of making further collections for his great work in Georgia: "But," says he, "what a trying scene appeared here! During my journey through America, I had written two well-meant, though injudicious, letters against England's two great favourites, 'The Whole Duty of Man,' and 'Archbishop Tillotson,' who, I said, knew no more of religion than Mohammed. Mr. John Wesley had been prevailed on to preach and print in favour of perfection and universal redemption, and very strongly against election, a doctrine which, I thought, and do now believe, was taught me of God, therefore could not possibly recede from. I had written an answer, which, though revised and much approved by some judicious divines, I think had some too strong expressions about absolute reprobation, which the apostle leaves rather to be inferred than expressed."

Mr. John Wesley had become determinately opposed to the doctrine of election, as contained in the seventeenth Article of the church of England; and the use made of the writings of Mr. Whitfield was to inflame the societies against him, as one who had dreadfully fallen. He says, "Ten thousand times would I rather have died than part with my old friends. It would have melted any heart to have seen Mr. Charles Wesley and me weeping after prayer, that, if possible, the breach might be prevented. Once I preached in the Foundry, (a place

which Mr. John Wesley had procured in my absence,) on Gal. iii., but no more." Preaching in Moorfields, he writes, " I had the mortification of seeing numbers of my spiritual children who, but a twelvemonth ago, would have plucked out their eyes for me, running by me whilst preaching, disdaining so much as to look at me, and some of them putting their fingers in their ears, that they might not hear one word I said. The like scene opened at Bristol, where I was denied preaching in the house I had founded ; busy-bodies, on both sides, blew up the coals. A breach ensued ; but as both differed in judgment, and not in affection, and aimed at the glory of our common Lord, though we hearkened too much to tale-bearers, on both sides, we were kept from anathematizing each other, and went on in our several way, being agreed in one point, endeavouring to convert souls to the blessed Mediator."

Thus these two distinguished men separated in their operations, and became the leaders of the two branches of the Methodist body,—the Calvinistic, and Arminian.

They both held the grand and essential peculiarities of the gospel, by which a sinner is pardoned, sanctified, and saved ; each embracing the all-sufficient atonement of the incarnate Son of God, and the regenerating, purifying influences of the Holy Spirit ; but Mr. Wesley rejected the doctrine of predestination, as stated in the seventeenth article of the church of England ; while Mr. Whitfield became more fully confirmed in truth. The question of *general* and *particular* redemption occasioned a difference of sentiment, and for a short time a shyness between them ; but they kept up an epistolary correspondence, and lived and died united in heart !

Mr. Whitfield said in his will, " I leave a mourning ring to my honoured and dear friends, and disinterested fellow-labourers, the Rev. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them in heart and affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine."

The respect and affection cherished by Mr. Wesley for his friend, will appear by a short extract from his funeral sermon. Having quoted the high testimonies of the public newspapers,

he says, “ These accounts are just and impartial; but they go little farther than the outside of his character: they show you the preacher, but not the man,—the Christian,—the saint of God. May I be permitted to add a little on this head, from a personal knowledge of forty years? Mention has already been made of his unparalleled zeal, his indefatigable activity, his tender-heartedness towards the poor. But should we not likewise mention his deep gratitude to all whom God had used as instruments of good by him, of whom he did not cease to speak in the most respectful manner, even to his dying day? Should we not mention, that he had a heart susceptible of the most generous and the most tender friendship? I have frequently thought that this, of all others, was the distinguishing part of his character. How few have we known of so kind a temper, of such large and overflowing affections! Was it not principally by this that the hearts of others were so strangely drawn and knit to him? Can any thing but love beget love? This shone in his very countenance, and continually breathed in all his words, whether in public or private. Was it not this which, quick and penetrating as lightning, flew from heart to heart? which gave life to his sermons, his conversation, his letters? Ye are witnesses. If it be inquired, what was the foundation of his integrity, or of his sincerity, courage, patience, and every other valuable and amiable quality, it is easy to give the answer. It was not the excellence of his natural temper, nor the strength of his understanding; it was not the force of education; no, nor the advice of his friends. It was no other than faith in a bleeding Lord; faith of the operation of God. It was a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. It was the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which was given unto him, filling his soul with tender, disinterested love to every child of man. From this source arose that torrent of eloquence which frequently bore down all before it; from this that astonishing force of persuasion, which the most ardent sinners could not resist. This it was which often made his head as waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears. I may close this head with observing, what an honour it pleased God to put upon his faithful

servant, by allowing him to declare his everlasting gospel in so many various countries, to such numbers of people, and with so great an effect on so many of their precious souls!"'

SECTION IV.—WESLEYAN, OR ARMINIAN METHODISTS.

Methodist societies increase—Lay preachers—Different societies of the Methodists—Conference—Number of Methodists in 1769—Methodism in America—in the West Indies—Number of Methodists in 1791, at the death of Mr. Wesley.

THE religious societies in connexion with Mr. Wesley became numerous in Bristol, London, and other places, and they still were increasing. In vain he solicited the co-operation of the regular clergy; through which he was necessitated to select some of the most zealous and best qualified among his followers to assist him, that proper attention might be given to the societies, and that the sphere of his labours might be extended. This was the origin of lay preachers among the Methodists; and such was the success attending their exertions, that however *unauthorized* the measure may appear, by modern ecclesiastical usage, it afforded him the highest satisfaction. For the guidance of the societies, Mr. Wesley drew up certain rules, which, with some additions and alterations suggested by circumstances, are still a part of the Methodist ecclesiastical law. Each society is divided into classes of from twenty to forty persons, having an experienced president, who is called Leader. They meet weekly for religious conversation and prayer, and to pay their contributions for the support of the ministry. The condition of admission to society is, "a desire to flee from the wrath to come." There is held weekly a Leader's-meeting, for deliberation on the affairs of the society. A number of societies, included in a district of ten or fifteen miles, is called a Circuit, to which one, two, or more ministers are appointed; besides assistant local preachers, who are generally men in business, residing in the several districts. Several circuits constitute a District. A Conference, consisting of a hundred or more ministers, is held annually, when the general

affairs of the whole body are considered. The first conference was held in London, in June, 1744. It consisted of six clergymen, and a few lay preachers, from different parts of the country. The results of their deliberations were recorded, to serve as a rule of their future proceedings, and since 1763 they have been published, under the title of "Minutes of Conference."

The scheme of policy for the preservation of this general body was profoundly laid: much of which being borrowed, as is supposed, from the society of Jesuits. The labours of Mr. Wesley and his assistant lay preachers, were remarkably successful in bringing multitudes into the ways of godliness. At the twenty-fourth conference, held in London, 1767, Mr. Whitfield was present, and the number in society, in the different circuits began to be published. They stood as follows:—

	Circuits.	Preachers.	Members.
In England	25	75	22,410
Ireland	9	19	2,801
Scotland.....	5	7	468
Wales.....	1	3	232
	—	—	—
	40	104	25,911
	—	—	—

The conference, in 1769, was informed that Methodism had been introduced into America, by certain of the society, assisted by lieutenant Webb, a military officer, who preached at New York and Philadelphia with great success. Two preachers were appointed by the conference to go over to their aid, and in 1771 Mr. Francis Astbury was ordained and sent thither by Mr. Wesley, to preside over them in the character of bishop.

Mr. Charles Wesley died March 29, 1788, aged eighty years. Mr. John Wesley died March 2, 1791, aged eighty-eight years.

Methodism continued rapidly to increase in America; and under the direction of Dr. Coke, several went forth as missionaries to the West Indies, and other places.

The state of the Wesleyan connexion, at the death of its

founder, may be collected from the following report from that body: there were,

	Circuits.	Preachers.	Members.
In England.....	65	196	52,832
Ireland.....	29	67	14,106
Scotland.....	8	18	1,086
Wales.....	3	7	566
Isle of Man...	1	3	2,580
Norman Isles..	2	4	498
West Indies ..	7	13	4,500
British America	4	6	800
United States..	97	198	43,265
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Total	216	512	120,233
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SECTION V.—WHITFIELD, OR CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

Whitfield excluded from his preaching-houses in England—His assistants—New erections—Tabernacles in London—Wales—Griffith Jones—Howell Harris—Countess of Huntingdon—Death of Whitfield—Funeral Sermons for him—Testimony of Mr. Toplady—Calvinistic Methodists not formed into a body—Influence of this people on the church of England.

MR. WHITFIELD, having been excluded from Mr. Wesley's connexion, and generally from the pulpits of the established church, was necessitated to seek other places, in which to prosecute his zealous labours. Mr. Cennick, with others of the first Methodists, being of Mr. Whitfield's sentiments, joined with him at Bristol, and assisted him to build another preaching-house at Kingswood, among the numerous colliers. Here, and at several other places, they preached to very large and serious congregations. Being ordered to attend the House of Commons, to give information concerning the state of Georgia, the speaker received him courteously, and assured him that there would be no persecution in the reign of George the Second. Thus encouraged, he pursued his plans with ardent zeal; and

his friends procuring a piece of ground in Moorfields, London, a large shed was erected as a temporary shelter from the weather, and called a "Tabernacle." Mr. Whitfield, at first, disliked the site of his new temple, on account of its vicinity to the Foundery, the preaching-house of Mr. Wesley, which gave it the appearance of opposition. But upon this occasion he remarks, "All was wonderfully overruled for good, and for the furtherance of the gospel. A fresh awakening immediately began. Congregations grew exceedingly large; and, at the people's desire, I sent, necessity reconciling me more and more to lay-preaching, for Messrs. Cennick, Harris, Seagrove, Humphries, and several others, to assist." New scenes of usefulness opened to him daily; and numerous invitations being sent to him from different places, he was enabled to visit them, leaving his lay assistants to preach among his settled congregations. He continued his practice of field-preaching, not only through all parts of England, but in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland; his ministry was crowned with extraordinary success.

In Wales, the power of godliness was eminently revived by the labours of Griffith Jones, and afterward by the zealous ministry of Howell Harris, a layman.

By these benevolent measures of Whitfield, the hidden springs of vital religion were powerfully inflamed; multitudes throughout the empire were savingly converted to Christ, and many ministers of the national church were brought to unite with the Methodists.

In the year 1748, Mr. Whitfield was introduced to the acquaintance of the countess of Huntingdon, in whom he found an intelligent, pious, faithful, and generous coadjutor; and he became one of her ladyship's chaplains. In 1753, he opened his new Tabernacle in Moorfields, London, a building capable of holding about four thousand persons: and, in the same year, he opened the Tabernacle at Bristol; two years after, another at Norwich; and in 1756, his new chapel in Tottenham Court Road, still larger than that in Moorfields.

To follow this apostolic servant of Jesus Christ through all his extensive travels, and to describe his wondrous successes, in turning sinners to God, would require volumes. In the

course of his ministry, which included thirty-four years and a quarter, he preached eighteen thousand sermons, which was somewhat more than five hundred sermons in a year! His usefulness in the conversion of sinners, appears to have corresponded with his indefatigable labours. He died in America, September 30, 1770, at Newbury Port, near Boston.

The death of Whitfield was lamented as a great public calamity, both in England and in America; and many funeral sermons were preached and published, to improve the sorrowful event, both by the ministers of the established church and of the Dissenters. Among the former may be mentioned, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Venn, Mr. Newton, Mr. Madan, and Mr. Toplady; and among the latter, Dr. Trotter, Dr Gibbons, Mr. Brewer, and others.

Mr. Toplady, in his sermon, says, “I deem myself happy in having an opportunity of thus publicly avowing the inexpressible esteem in which I held this wonderful man; and the affectionate veneration which I must ever retain for the memory of one, whose acquaintance and ministry were attended with the most important spiritual benefit to me, and to tens of thousands beside.”

“It will not be saying too much, if I term him, The Apostle of the English empire; in point of zeal for God, a long course of indefatigable and incessant labours, unparalleled disinterestedness, and astonishingly extensive usefulness. England has had the honour of producing the greatest men in almost every walk of useful knowledge. At the head of these are, first, archbishop Bradwardine, the prince of divines; second, Milton, the prince of poets; third, Sir Isaac Newton, the prince of philosophers; fourth, Whitfield, the prince of preachers.”

The Calvinistic Methodists, in connexion with Mr. Whitfield, were not formed into a regular body, like that of Mr. Wesley: yet they are numerous, in different parts of England, Wales, Ireland, and America; but chiefly as independent congregations.

The influence of the Methodists was powerfully felt among the Dissenters; with whom an unprecedented revival of religion commenced. They also received large accessions from the converts of the itinerant ministry, and new congregations

were formed in different parts of the kingdom. Many of the clergy in the church of England were awakened from their lethargy, and brought to a saving acquaintance with the gospel of Christ, and to labour for the salvation of men with a zeal and activity before unknown. Some of these assisted Mr. Whitfield, preaching, for several Sundays in the year, at his chapels in London, to congregations of four thousand persons. After the death of Whitfield, his tabernacles were supplied by various ministers, but chiefly from among the Dissenters; and the increase of the people tended especially to the augmentation of the regular Independent churches, some of whom adopted the liturgy of the church of England in their public worship.

SECTION VI.—CALVINISTIC METHODISTS OF THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON'S CONNEXION.

Lady Huntingdon—Her conversion—Her consecration to God—Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Jones, and Dr. Haweis, her chaplains—She opens chapels—Her college at Trevecka—Her death—Lady Anne Erskine—Influence of this body on the church of England.

DR. HAWEIS, in his Church History, says,—This noble and elect lady Huntingdon had lived in the highest circle of fashion: by birth, a daughter of the house of Shirly; by marriage, united with the earl of Huntingdon; both bearing the royal arms of England, as descendants from her ancient monarchs. Lady Betty, and lady Margaret Hastings, his lordship's sisters, were women of singular excellence. The zealous preachers, branded with the name of Methodists, had awakened great attention. Lady Margaret Hastings, happening to hear them, received “the truth as it is in Jesus,” from their ministry. Conversing with lady Huntingdon one day on this subject, lady Huntingdon was exceedingly struck with a sentence which she uttered; “that since she had known and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, she had been as happy as an angel.” To any such sensation of happiness, lady Huntingdon felt that she was yet an utter stranger. Reflecting upon these words in a season of dangerous illness, she instantly, from her bed, lifted

up her heart to Jesus, the Saviour, with this importunate prayer, and immediately all her distress and fear were removed, and she was filled with joy and peace in believing. The life of this lady was henceforth consecrated to the service and glory of Christ.

On the death of my lord Huntingdon, she was left the entire management of her children and of their fortunes, which she improved with the greatest fidelity. Having become her own mistress, she resolved to devote herself wholly to the service of Jesus Christ, and of the souls redeemed by his blood. Her benevolent heart embraced all whom she esteemed real Christians, whatever their denomination or opinions might be on unessential points : but being herself more congenial in sentiment with Mr. Whitfield than with Mr. Wesley, she favoured those especially who were ministers of the Calvinistic persuasion, according to the literal sense of the Articles of the church of England.

With the intention of giving them a larger sphere of usefulness, she opened her house in Park-street; supposing that, as a peeress of the realm, she had an indisputable right to employ, as her family chaplains, those ministers of the church whom she patronized. On the Lord's-day, the great and noble were invited to spend the evening in her drawing-room ; when Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Jones, and other ministers of Christ, addressed to them faithfully " all the words of this life ;" and they were heard with apparently deep attention.

The illness of her younger son, which proved fatal, led her to Brighton for sea-bathing. There her active spirit having produced some awakening among the people, she erected a little chapel contiguous to her house, that the gospel might be preached to them. This was so well filled, that it was a third time enlarged, and the success led to further erections. Bath, the resort of fashion, beheld an elegant and commodious place of worship raised by the same liberal hand. Oathall, Bretby, and various other places, received the gospel by her means. At first she confined herself to ministers of the established church : but her zeal enlarging with her success, and many through the kingdom begging her assistance, she purchased, built, or hired, chapels commodious for divine service. As these multiplied

through England, Ireland, and Wales, the ministers who had before laboured for her ladyship were unequal to the task, and some were unwilling to move in a sphere so extensive, and which began to be branded as irregular, and to meet with great opposition. As the work enlarged beyond her power to supply the chapels with regular ministers, lady Huntingdon resolved to employ the same methods which Messrs. Whitfield and Wesley had pursued with so much success. She invited laymen, of piety and abilities, to exhort and keep up the congregations which she had established. In order to provide proper persons for the work, she now retired into Wales, where she erected, at Trevecka, a college for training up young men of eminent piety for the gospel ministry. As the calls were often urgent, her students were too frequently thrust forth into the harvest before they had made any considerable proficiency in the languages or sacred literature, in which it had been her intention they should have been instructed. Some of them knew little more than their native tongue; yet being men of strong sense, and real devotedness to God, their ministry was greatly blessed."

Lady Huntingdon died in 1791, and her devoted and excellent friend, lady Anne Erskine, sister to the late lord Erskine, took her situation, and paid the same attention to the concerns of that religious community. In 1792 the college was removed to Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, under the superintending care of trustees appointed for that purpose.

Many of the students educated at this institution have become distinguished ministers in other communions; some of whom have been ordained in the church of England, and others have settled as Independent ministers. At present, there are no congregations of this connexion in Ireland; nor are any of the regular clergy of the national church officiating in its chapels. Their places of worship amounted to about sixty; and, it is supposed, the number of their communicants is about thirty thousand.

This body has been of incalculable advantage to the interests of religion, not only by a zealous, orthodox, and successful ministry, but by their conciliating prejudice against evangelical doctrine with the use of the liturgy of the national church. By

this means, many have been prepared to listen to the faithful preaching of the gospel, both in the establishment and among the Dissenters, through which both parties have been happily increased.

SECTION VII.—CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LATTER PART OF THE CENTURY.

Excitement among the clergy by the prevalence of Methodism—Expulsion of six pious Graduates from Oxford—Spirit of grace on some clergymen—Fewness of evangelical clergymen—Mr. Romaine—Pious lecturers—Chapels licensed under the Toleration Act—Addition of pious clergy from these—Mr. Thornton's society for the purchase of livings—Evening lectures—Distinguished clergymen—Universities—Mr. Wilberforce—Mrs. Hannah More.

THE rise of the Methodists, and their evangelical, indefatigable labours, excited a spirit of inquiry among many of the regular clergy. They were generally stung with mortification to see their province invaded by mere laymen, with increasing multitudes attached to their ministry. The superior clergy generally employed every effort to check the revival of piety in the church; as they denominated it “puritanism” and “methodism.” So incensed were they, that at Oxford, in 1763, six young men were expelled from Edmund Hall, being *convicted*, before “the vice-chancellor and some of the heads of houses,” of “holding methodistical tenets, and taking upon them to pray, read, and expound the Scriptures, and singing hymns, in a private house.” In vain did they appeal to the Articles of the church in support of their doctrines; and equally vain was the ample testimony borne to their piety and exemplary lives. Many a worthy curate, also, was expelled from his situation on account of his evangelical doctrines, and his pious zeal; of which we might give affecting instances, worthy only of the seventeenth century.

Still the Spirit of grace was shed forth upon many of the clergy, from time to time: they became converted to the true faith of Christ; and, having received the truth in the love of it, they laboured diligently and zealously for the salvation of the souls of men.

Mr. John Newton, an eminent London clergyman, speaking of his church in a letter to a friend, says, “ I am not sure, that in the year 1740 there was a single gospel minister in the whole kingdom. Now we have I know not how many ; but I think not less than four hundred.” This letter was written in 1797. In 1801, he says in another letter, “ I am told there are ten thousand parishes in England : I believe more than nine thousand of these are without the gospel :”—meaning in the establishment.

London was deplorably deficient of evangelical clergymen. In 1749, Mr. Romaine was chosen lecturer of St. Dunstan’s in the West, where he laboured with remarkable success, being a man of apostolical piety and zeal : yet in this station he suffered much opposition, having not more than one regular evangelical coadjutor in the whole metropolis ! He was appointed lecturer at St. George’s, Hanover-square, in 1750 ; but on account of his popularity, and the church being crowded, he was dismissed, in 1755, from his station at the latter church. In 1764 he was elected rector of Blackfriars, where he laboured with remarkable tokens of the Divine favour, during a period of forty years. He died in 1795, leaving the character of a holy man, and a powerful preacher ; which was illustrated by numerous seals to his ministry in the gospel.

Before the decease of Mr. Romaine, there was a considerable addition of pious clergymen in London, chiefly by means of the privilege enjoyed by some parishes to elect their own ministers ; and by the further privilege, with which others are favoured, to choose a lecturer, in addition to their rector or vicar. In such cases, the Dissenters exerted their influence in favour of those candidates who were supposed or known to be evangelical in their doctrine.

In different parts of the kingdom, pious Churchmen, whose evangelical pastors had been removed by death or preferment, built chapels, for which they procured licenses, and chose their own ministers : but, in many cases, such licenses were refused by the bishops ; when they procured ministers who preferred the use of the liturgy, and placed themselves, as Dissenters, under the protection of the Toleration Act. The church of England received considerable accessions from pious young men of

such congregations ; some of whom, possessing promising talents, were supported at the universities by the subscriptions of individuals, collected for that purpose. A society was formed, with the liberal and benevolent Mr. Thornton at its head, for the purchase of church livings ; by which means, many pious and eminent clergymen were promoted to important and influential stations.

As the Dissenters and Methodists generally assembled for public worship on the evenings of the Lord's-day, the practice was adopted by many in the establishment ; especially in the large towns, by evangelical clergymen. The novelty of these services attracted the attention of multitudes : the congregations were large, and incalculable was the good resulting from these services. Among those who were most conspicuous in the church of England, for their active and laborious piety, at this period, may be mentioned Mr. Hervey, Mr. Grimshawe, Mr. Berridge, Mr. Romaine, Mr. Toplady, Mr. Venn, Mr. Newton, Mr. Scott, Mr. Cecil, Dr. Haweis, and Mr. Simeon. Though so few could be found in the middle of the century, at its close the established church was supposed to contain nearly a thousand evangelical clergymen ; and they were increasing.

In the middle of the century, scarcely a professor or tutor of eminent piety was to be found at either university : but at its close, it was believed that, both among the teachers and the taught, men of evangelical principles and spirit were to be found in almost every college, both at Cambridge and at Oxford.

An effectual means of furthering the cause of vital godliness among the educated classes in the church, may be reckoned the writings of Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Hannah More, towards the close of the century. The "Practical View of Religion," by a layman, a British senator, was a novelty ; and its evangelical purity of doctrine taught many the value of pure, scriptural Christianity. The elegant and valuable writings of Mrs. Hannah More breathed the same devout spirit : they were adapted to the classic refinement of the most accomplished, while some of them were admirably suited to interest and instruct the uneducated poor.

SECTION VIII.—DISSENTERS.

LATTER PART OF THE CENTURY.

Number of Dissenting churches—Monthly lectures—County associations—Religious Book Society—Robert Raikes—Sunday-schools—Religious Periodicals.

DURING the former part of this century, the Dissenters had increased above a hundred congregations; so that at the accession of George III., in 1760, they were ascertained to amount in England, to one thousand two hundred and ninety-two; three hundred and ninety of whom were Baptist churches: and one hundred and sixty in Wales; of whom fifty-nine were Baptists.

The progress and prevalence of Methodism had a most surprising influence upon the regular Dissenters; and the power of genuine godliness became eminently increased, at this time, in their churches. Monthly lectures were revived and established in the several parts of London. County associations of ministers and churches were formed throughout the country, by the Baptists and Independents, for mutual co-operation in the advancement of religion in their respective localities. New congregations were raised in neglected populous towns and villages, and stated county or district meetings were held for prayer and conference. By these various means, many schemes of benevolence were formed: new seminaries were established for the education of pious men for the ministry, to supply the wants of the increasing churches; and to furnish missionaries for the promulgation of the gospel, not only throughout Great Britain, but embracing every heathen country.

The diversified plans of operation became so greatly multiplied, that it will be necessary to appropriate a distinct chapter briefly to enumerate the chief of them. In 1750, a society was formed in London, for the purpose of circulating Bibles and approved books among the poor, at a reduced price; and several Churchmen co-operated in the good work. This may be regarded as an earnest of the still further union of the minis-

ters and members of Jesus Christ, in promoting his glorious cause, which has since taken place in the Bible Society and some other institutions.

In 1784, Mr. Robert Raikes, a worthy and liberal Churchman at Gloucester, deeply affected with the prevailing ignorance and depravity of the lower classes around him, commenced a Sunday-school, for the purpose of teaching the children of the poor to read the Holy Scriptures. At the same time, Mr. William Fox, a Baptist of London, was deliberating on a plan for the universal education of the poor; and which he laid before the "Baptist Monthly Meeting" in May, 1785. The chairman supposing Mr. Fox intended to limit his plan to the Baptist denomination, that gentleman replied, "The work is great, and I shall not be satisfied until every person in the world be able to read the BIBLE, and therefore we must call upon all the world to help us." A provisional committee was appointed, to appeal to the public, and to call a public meeting, for the purpose of forming a society for the education of the poor. Mr. Fox, in the mean time, hearing of Mr. Raikes's attempts, opened a correspondence with him, to learn his plan of procedure; through which, at the public meeting, August 10, 1785, there was formed "A Society for the Establishment and Support of Sunday-schools throughout Great Britain." This proceeding being published, the plan was immediately adopted by several bodies of Dissenters and Methodists; so that in a few years almost every congregation had a Sunday-school attached to it; and thus so many nurseries were established for the increase of Christian knowledge, and the enlargement of the church of God.

Another most powerful engine of moral and religious benefit was, the plan of periodical publications. The principal of these were, the Gospel, the Spiritual, the Christian, the Methodist, and the Evangelical Magazines; by whose monthly and extensive circulation, divine doctrine and religious information became diffused through the empire to an amazing extent; and facilities were afforded for the advancement of those great institutions which now dignify and adorn our nation and bless mankind, and are the means of promoting the Redeemer's glory through the whole habitable world.

CHAPTER VI.

SCOTLAND.

Restoration of patronage—Efforts to preserve purity in the appointment of ministers—Testimony of Dr. Haweis—Wesley and Whitfield visit Scotland—Reformed Presbytery—Glass and Sandeman—Erskines—Secession—Synod of Relief—Baptists—Independents—Episcopal church.

SCOTLAND was blessed with a number of eminent and devoted ministers, not only before, but after the Revolution. But the restoration of patronage in the church of Scotland, by the influence of queen Anne's ministry in 1712, indicated a measure of declension from evangelical purity in the leading ministers of the established church, and occasioned the admission of many into the sacred office, whose piety was doubtful, and whose doctrine was unsound. Arianism from England was believed to have been adopted by some of its ministers; and at least by one of the professors of divinity, John Simpson, of Glasgow.

Vigorous efforts were made, by several distinguished men, to preserve purity of doctrine, and to correct the abuses in church government. Amongst those eminent divines were Thomas Boston, James Hogg, James Wardlaw, Ebenezer Erskine, and his brother Ralph.

The worldly innovations found powerful defenders in the establishment; while, as Dr. Haweis observes, they "grieved and disgusted many of her most excellent pastors, and produced divisions. These led to the Presbytery of Relief, the Seceders, the Burghers, and Antiburghers, the shades of whose differences this history cannot particularize. A host arose, with the famous Erskines and their fellows at their head, who were zealous advocates for the truth as it is in Jesus, and sought to revive the life of religion in their several congregations. Their labours were eminently blessed, and remarkable out-pourings of God's Spirit have been recorded in many parts of that vineyard."

"Truth compels me to say, that among these separatists of various denominations, the greatest zeal to promote the evan-

gelical doctrines hath been displayed; though the established church hath not ceased to furnish many, very many, eminent witnesses for God, not ashamed of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, but daring to be singular, and to bear his reproach. Under their ministry, a numerous and chosen people in the Scottish kirk, as well as among the Dissenters, continue to be reckoned to the Lord for a generation; and, proportional to their numbers, the members of the kirk are generally better informed, and more evangelical in profession, than the people of England. But great and awful declension from gospel purity must be acknowledged and lamented.”*

Mr. Wesley visited Scotland in 1751, and many welcomed him as well as Whitfield, who found many cordial friends among the ministers, by whom he was wished to unite with the Presbyterian church. Methodism did not, however, receive such countenance in Scotland as it did in other places; as has been thought, on account of the people being better furnished with the means of knowledge, and of the gospel; so that at the death of Mr. Wesley, in 1791, there were in this country only eight circuits, eighteen preachers, and one thousand and eighty-six members.

We cannot refrain from giving a brief sketch of the origin of the several principal religious bodies in Scotland, who exist as Dissenters from the established church.

In 1702, Mr. John M'Millan became the head of those who were the adherents of the Covenanters, or Cameronians. In 1743, they formed themselves into a “Presbytery in the name of Christ, the alone Head of his church,” under the title of the “Reformed Presbytery.” At the close of the century they consisted of about twenty-six congregations.

In 1730, John Glass was deposed by the General Assembly, on account of some peculiarities of doctrine, and of his objections to the national establishments of religion; and being joined by Robert Sandeman, Independent churches were formed by their ministry in many parts of Scotland.

In 1753, Ebenezer Erskine of Stirling, W. Wilson of Perth, A. Moncrief of Abernethy, and J. Fisher of Kinclaven, origi-

* Impartial History, Vol. III., p. 283, 284.

nated the Secession. They were men famous for their purity of life, and the sound orthodoxy of their religious principles. In their protest they declared, that they were "laid under the necessity of making a secession, not from the principles of the church of Scotland, as stated in her tests of orthodoxy, but from the prevailing party in that church, till they shall see and amend their errors." They greatly increased in numbers; but they became divided into two parties in 1745, on the subject of the Burgess oath: one party, thinking it lawful to take it, were called Burghers; and the other objecting against it, were called Antiburghers: but though they were thus divided, they both held the same principles of evangelical doctrine.

In 1752, the Scottish Synod of Relief was formed, of which Mr. Gillespie is considered the founder. The design of it was to relieve congregations from the necessity of receiving a minister, imposed by the Assembly, contrary to their wishes, and to assist them in obtaining a minister of their own choice.

Besides these several bodies, the Baptists had churches in different parts of Scotland, with faithful pastors.

The new Independents rapidly increased towards the close of the century. New vigour was diffused through Scotland, by the separation from the church of J. and R. Haldane, Esqrs., who, with several others, itinerating, preached with great success. They were joined by two eminent ministers, Mr. Innes, and Mr. Ewing, who seceded from the established church, and were remarkably useful in advancing the cause of pure religion.

Episcopacy had also some adherents in Scotland; and they had an "Episcopal church;" but the bishops had little more than a nominal dignity superior to their brethren, they being pastors of congregations. They held six diocesses, containing about fifty chapels; but of course they were considered dissenters from the established church of Scotland.

CHAPTER VII.

IRELAND.

Declension of religion in Ireland—Arianism—Presbyterians in Ulster—Number of churches—Methodists—Persecution—Thomas Walsh—State of Methodism at the death of Mr. Wesley.

RELIGION, in the eighteenth century, was in a most deplorable state in Ireland. From the period of the rebellion in 1641, and the retirement of archbishop Usher from that country, the established church in Ireland sunk more and more into formality, leaving little else remaining.

In the early part of this century, that communion partook of the deathly apathy of the church of England, with many additional causes of disadvantage, and the Arian and Socinian errors prevailed. The Roman Catholics constituted the bulk of the nation; and, in many parishes, scarcely even a nominal Protestant was to be found, the mass of the population being sunk in the darkness and superstition of popery.

Ulster, the northern province of Ireland, had been blessed in the last century with numerous colonists from Scotland, who had fled from the persecutions of Charles II. By these the Scriptures were possessed, and Presbyterian churches were formed in most of the towns. For a long period, much of the power of God rested upon them: but the Arian doctrines spread among the more wealthy of their members, and two parties were formed. The orthodox were denominated “old lights,” and the “new lights” generally included many Arians, and even Socinians; though some of them were sound in the faith; yet they were not distinguished for the life and power of religion, and error operated as a blight.

How far these churches increased, may be partly estimated by the observation, that the General Synod of Ulster, in 1688, included ninety congregations; in 1725, one hundred and forty-eight; and at the close of the century, one hundred and seventy-seven. It may be, therefore, that vital godliness prospered more than is generally imagined.

Methodism, by Mr. Wesley, was introduced into Ireland, in the year 1747; and universal excitement was produced by his ministry, and by the labours of his colleagues. Many, both in the established church and among the Dissenters, were blessed by the preaching of the Methodists; and many souls were evidently converted to God, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual religion provoked "the carnal mind," which "is enmity against God," and the licentious rabble stirred up a furious persecution against the Methodists at Cork in 1749; so that the grand jury made a memorable presentment, which deserves especial notice. They said, "We find and present Charles Wesley, to be a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common disturber of his Majesty's peace, and we pray that he may be transported!" Nine others are mentioned, as having been presented in like manner, after having suffered all kinds of insult and abuse by the mob. Their innocence, however, was fully established before the judge at the assizes, and their cause was made to triumph.

Of the numerous Methodist converts, one of the most eminent at this time was Thomas Walsh. He had been a Roman Catholic, and "his soul chiefly mourned over the poor ignorant people of that communion which he had renounced. For their sakes he often preached in Irish, which he perfectly understood; and many of them were thereby turned to God. Thirsting for knowledge, he employed himself night and day in studying the original language of the Scriptures, and became a respectable Hebrew scholar. But as one observes of him, 'His soul was too large for his body.' At the age of twenty-eight he died an old man, being worn out by his great and uninterrupted labours."

Referring to the last conference held in Dublin, in the year 1789, Mr. Wesley says, "I had much satisfaction in this conference; in which, conversing with between forty and fifty travelling preachers, I found such a body of men as I hardly believed could have been brought together in Ireland: men of so sound experience, so deep piety, and so strong understanding, that I am convinced, they are no way inferior to the English conference, except it be in number."

Of the state of Methodism in Ireland, we may form a tolerable judgment by the report at the time of Mr. Wesley's death in 1791: at that period there were twenty-nine circuits; sixty-seven preachers; and fourteen thousand one hundred and six members in their society.

CHAPTER VIII.

AMERICA.

New England States—Attempts to establish the church of England—New York—New Jersey—Pennsylvania—Virginia—Carolinas—Moravians—Religion in New England—President Edwards—David Brainerd—Independence of America—Methodism—Missionaries in the West Indies—Episcopal church formed—Review of the Common Prayer.

RELIGION continued to flourish remarkably in the New England States during the eighteenth century. But though several attempts had been made, especially in the reign of Charles II., to bring the colonists to adopt the rites of the church of England, they were nearly fruitless, except in relation to some of the emigrants, who were of that communion. So that in the year 1761, there were more than seven hundred congregations of religious professors in those four States, yet only thirty-six of them observed the forms of the church of England!

New York was first colonized by the Swedes and Danes; but was afterwards possessed by the Dutch, from whom it was taken by the English, with a long line of coast, in 1664. Numerous refugees hastened thither, principally Presbyterians, Dutch, English, and Scotch, with many German Calvinists and Lutherans. We have not an enumeration of the congregations in the whole States; but in 1740, the number of places of worship in the city of New York was seventeen, exclusive of a Jewish synagogue; in three of which the liturgy of the church of England was used.

New Jersey joins the province of New York; and it was colonized by the same class of people as those of that State. Among the English who settled here, a large majority were

those of the persecuted Nonconformists of England, with a similar class from different parts of the European Continent. In the year 1765, the list of places of worship in this State contains one hundred and seventy-two ; of whom twenty-two observed the forms of the church of England ; the rest were Presbyterians, Quakers, and Baptists.

Pennsylvania was taken from the Dutch by Sir Robert Carr and Sir William Penn, in 1664, with several other States ; and in payment of monies due from the government to the father, it was granted to his son, William Penn, in 1680,—some particulars of which we have already mentioned, in relation to the seventeenth century. Penn was followed by great numbers of Quakers and Christians of other denominations ; and, as the foundation of all his institutions, this wise philanthropist laid it down, that no man should be molested on account of his religious opinions ; but that all should be equally eligible to fill the offices of government. Prosperity attended his enlightened procedure, and crowned his noble and benevolent labours. Religion greatly flourished among his people ; but we have not a list of the several congregations in this State.

The more southern States were colonized chiefly by men who were influenced by the motive of accumulating wealth ; so that religious advantages were but little regarded, and they were not distinguished for zeal in disseminating evangelical doctrine.

Virginia, in 1693, attracted the attention of William and Mary, through the zealous activity of James Blair, who left Scotland in the time of Charles II. He formed a plan for the establishment of a college, and came to England to collect for it : the king and queen contributed two thousand pounds. Mr. Blair was president of the college for fifty years.

Only a few Dissenters settled in Virginia, and the forms of the church of England were chiefly observed by the settlers ; but the power of godliness was scarcely acknowledged. Negro slavery prevailed to an amazing extent on the tobacco plantations, by whose labours the planters were enriched, while both the slaves and their owners were ignorant of the gospel, and most awfully depraved in their principles and habits.

The Carolinas were but little favoured with the means of

grace; but when Georgia was added to them in 1732, the devoted Moravians made considerable efforts to evangelize the people, and their labours were eminently blessed. Count Zinzendorff had visited England, for the purpose of gaining permission for some of the pious brethren at Hernhuth to enter upon that field of missionary labour, and archbishop Potter expressed his approbation of the plan proposed by the Moravian count. Hence we find, that in the same vessel in which Mr. John Wesley sailed to officiate as chaplain to the colony, there were twenty-six Moravian missionaries destined for the same place. Mr. Whitfield followed, and erected at Savannah, the capital of Georgia, an orphan house, after the plan of that built by professor Frank, at Halle. His labours were very successful, and his great building was afterwards converted into a college.

Although, in various degrees, the power of godliness prevailed in the churches of different states, its gracious influences were especially experienced in New England, particularly about the middle of the century. Jonathan Edwards, afterwards president of the college in New Jersey, was an instrument highly honoured of God in advancing the revival of religion at that period. His learned writings remain an imperishable monument of his uncommon talents, as well as of his piety and his zeal for the salvation of the souls of men.

David Brainerd was a most devoted missionary to the American Indians, and his success corresponded with his zeal for their salvation. Towards the close of the century, the war with England, in which the Americans were assisted by the French, was seriously prejudicial to the interests of religion; but they gained the recognition of their independence in 1783, when they united in a general confederation, as "The United States of America," the basis of which was, an acknowledgment of the equal right of all men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. As this matter is of peculiar importance, it shall be given in the words of Dr. Morse, an eminent American divine, in his valuable geography. He says, "The constitution of the United States provides against the making any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise of it; and in the constitution of

the respective States, religious liberty is a fundamental article. Religion is here placed on its proper basis, without the feeble and unwarranted aid of the civil power: it is left to be supported by its own evidence, by the lives of its professors, and the almighty care of its Divine Author."

Besides the several denominations of Dissenters, and others of a like spirit of different communions, from the Continent of Europe, who had flourished in America, the ministry of zealous men, in connexion with Mr. Wesley, had been eminently successful in the promotion of Methodism. An extensive system of itinerary on that plan had been formed, and preachers were occasionally sent over from England to superintend or regulate the affairs of the society; so that at the death of Mr. Wesley, in the year 1791, there were ninety-seven circuits, one hundred and ninety-eight travelling preachers, and forty-three thousand two hundred and sixty-five members in communion!

Missionaries from the devoted Moravians had already been settled in some of the West India islands, where they laboured with zeal and success; when Dr. Coke was driven in a gale, with several assistant preachers, to the island of Antigua, about the year 1786. These Methodist brethren remained in that island, labouring with their accustomed success; so that in 1791, their circuits were four, their ministers six, and their number four thousand five hundred in communion!

Before we leave America, it will be proper to notice the establishing of an episcopal church in that country. This being desired by the friends of episcopacy in both countries, an Act of Parliament was obtained in England in 1786, authorizing "the consecration of church officers for foreign countries." In consequence of which, Dr. Provost and Dr. White were consecrated at Lambeth palace in 1787; but Dr. Seabury obtained that consecration in 1784, from the non-juring bishops in Scotland. Thus the episcopal bishops of America possess the same kind of ordination as the English prelates; but the ministers of that communion, however learned and orthodox, are not permitted to officiate in the church of England, without re-ordination, as is the case with Dissenters. This unchristian exclusion was provided by a

clause in the Act, by which it was declared, that such consecrations of bishops, and orders granted under them, should not qualify them for actual service in the church of England.

The episcopacy of the American body is little more than nominal; the extravagant titles of the English prelacy being rejected, and the bishops themselves being pastors of congregations. As to the offices of Dean, Archdeacon, Prebend, Canon, and various others, in the American episcopal church they have no existence; and the right of choosing their own ministers is secured to the people.

As to the Common Prayer, they retain the substance of the English liturgy; but with corrections and alterations similar to those suggested by the Puritans. "In 1789, the episcopal clergy convened in Philadelphia. At this convention they corrected and ratified the Book of Common Prayer. The prayers for the king and royal family were omitted, and prayers adapted to the government of the United States inserted. An alteration was also made in the burial service, and various resolutions passed for the government of the church." Thus the liturgy is greatly improved; but some things are left to the discretion of the minister for extemporary enlargement, as various circumstances may require.

CHAPTER IX.—EASTERN CHURCHES.

Degraded state of the churches under the Turks—Nestorians—Greece—Egypt—Abyssinia—Russia—Peter the Great—Reforms religion—Raskolniks—Their character—Their number—Zeal of Toma—Moravians.

A melancholy gloom overspread the eastern nations in the eighteenth century. Savage despotism, ignorance, and superstition, enchainèd the vast population; and pure, scriptural religion seems to have been almost unknown.

Nominal Christians were exceedingly numerous throughout the Turkish empire; but their wretched forms of worship, and their destitution of the Scriptures, indicate the almost total absence of spiritual, intelligent piety.

The Nestorians still maintained their independence of the patriarch of Constantinople, though their propositions for a union with the Roman church were little regarded, on account of their poverty.

Greece, and the islands of the Archipelago, are nominally Christian: but, "from all that can be collected of those whom war or curiosity has led to visit these regions, the state of religion among them is miserably low; reduced to superstitious forms and observances; and the papas, or priests, little better informed than the people."

Egypt had many Christians in name, but their ignorance and superstition were the most extreme. Attempts were made by the devoted Moravians to introduce the gospel into Abyssinia, but in vain: in 1783 they were expelled, and returned to Europe.

Abyssinia abounds with those who call themselves Christians; and, as the celebrated traveller, Bruce, observes, "No country can equal the number of their churches; one of which, a thatched conical building, supported by wooden pillars, every great man builds, as an atonement for his crimes; or a conqueror to celebrate his victory." Many Jewish rites, besides circumcision, were observed by the Abyssinians; and "the sacrament is administered to them in both kinds:" but they equal, or even surpass, the Greeks in bigotry and superstition.

Russia, including in its empire provinces, not only in Europe, but in Asia and in America, possesses a vast population, with about forty millions who were denominated Christians. Most of those, however, except a few Moravians, and a small proportion of Lutherans, were sunk in ignorance, superstition, and barbarism.

Peter the Great took measures, with extraordinary zeal, to enlighten and elevate his people; and when in France, in 1717, he was solicited by the Catholic doctors of the Sorbonne, in Paris, to agree to a union of the Russian church with the Roman. But Peter possessed too much both of pride and penetration to yield to their proposal. In 1720, the ecclesiastical council appointed by Peter, who assumed an absolute headship over the church in Russia, procured a new transla-

tion of the Scriptures, and encouraged their circulation. In 1723, he permitted Protestants to build churches and schools for their own service, and declared that his subjects were at liberty to embrace the reformed religion. The Dissenters in Russia, called Raskolniks, or Schismatics, though they call themselves Starovertsi, "believers of the old faith," still increased. Dr. Pinkerton, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, says, "The Dissenters of the present day have laid aside many of the absurd notions which distinguished their ancestors; and indeed the greater part of them are usually better versed in the Holy Scriptures than their neighbours. I have sometimes met with common peasants, belonging to the Raskolniks, who were well acquainted with the Scriptures, and could quote them in support of their opinions with great readiness; and though, at first their forefathers were such enemies to printed copies of the Scriptures, yet I have more than once found a printed folio copy of the Bible in the hut of a Raskolnik."

"The Raskolniks, in general, are distinguished for their exemplary morals. A Raskolnik has scarcely ever been known to have had a suit at law against a brother. They are studious in settling all their disputes among themselves, and this is usually done by arbitration. Most of the opulent Russian merchants in Petersburg, Moscow, and the other great towns of the empire, are Raskolniks; and not only foreigners, but even the Russians themselves, depend more upon their integrity in dealings than upon others. But the several persecutions to which they have at different times been subjected, have made them exceedingly shy and cautious in making known their opinions; and as they are not allowed to publish any thing in their own defence, it is difficult to obtain correct information with respect to their numbers; all that has yet appeared on these subjects having been brought forward by their opposers. Many of them, also, conceal their opinions, and the particular sect to which they belong; a circumstance that is occasioned by the general odium which is attached to the name of Raskolnik. However, after the various unsuccessful attempts which had been made by the government to bring the Raskolniks again into the bosom of the church, Catherine II. at last, in 1785,

published a manifesto, in which permission is granted them to use the old manuscript books, and they are entreated to receive regularly ordained priests from the mother church. This proposition has been embraced by many of them; and all open persecution, since that time, has ceased. From the above causes, it is almost impossible to ascertain the number of Dissenters of different denominations in Russia; but, on a moderate calculation, they are supposed to amount to about two millions."

A remarkable instance of zeal, in one of the Raskolniki ministers, named Toma, may be thought worthy of record. "He went to Moscow, and boldly preached against the invocation of saints. Being threatened by the clergy, his zeal fired him to take an axe, and, entering a church, to hew in pieces the images of St. Alexius and the Virgin. He was seized and condemned, first to have his right hand consumed in the fire, and afterwards to be burnt alive:—a sentence which he suffered with the most sedate fortitude, continuing in the flames to testify against the abuses of the dominant church."

Besides these scriptural Dissenters, by means of the noble efforts of the Moravians, and some German colonists, much light of Divine truth was diffused through several of the Russian provinces; and a body, amounting to twenty thousand persons, are computed to have been attached to their ministry, many of whom adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour.

Several other branches of the eastern church existed under various denominations; Armenians, Georgians, Jacobites, Copts, and Syrians; but they were, in an equal, or greater degree, deplorably ignorant and superstitious; and during the eighteenth century they were almost entirely destitute of the Holy Scriptures.

BOOK EIGHTH.

CENTURY XIX.

INTRODUCTION.—Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, we beheld the church of God struggling for renovated powers, and beginning to obey the voice of the inspired prophets,—“ Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the **LORD** is risen upon thee.” By her increased exertions, and the evident tokens of the Divine favour, we were prepared to recognise the wonders of sovereign grace, which have been manifested in our happy days. A brief review of the work of God in the nineteenth century cannot but excite our astonishment, and fill us with gratitude, while we joyfully anticipate the greater glories of the **LORD** which are yet to be revealed.

CHAPTER I.—LUTHERAN CHURCHES.

Low state of religion at the close of the last century—Infidelity countenanced by Joseph II. and Frederick I.—Hymns of the Pietists—Neology—Rationalism—Establishment of Bible Societies.

EVANGELICAL purity had lamentably fallen in the Lutheran churches of Germany, during the greater part of the eighteenth century; so that at its close, scarcely any one was known as a zealous preacher of the gospel in that country. Many of the most eminent scholars and critics in the languages of the sacred books, were among the professors of divinity in the German universities: but their speculations on the Holy Scriptures, and their interpretations of the inspired records, were generally of a very objectionable character; indicating a state of mind inclined to deism, and at enmity against the doctrines of Christ.

Infidelity had been rendered fashionable at the German

courts by Joseph II., the Roman emperor, and Frederick I., king of Prussia ; and their influence, among the superior scholars on the Continent, was extensive and lasting. Nevertheless, the pious writings of Arndt, Spener, Frank, Gerhard, and other of the German Pietists, were scattered widely, and still possessed by many, who read them with a lively and saving interest. Their evangelical hymns too, in a great variety of beautiful metres, amounting, it is said, to seventy thousand, while those used in England by all denominations amount to only about five thousand, were doubtless sung with melody in their hearts by those in the humbler walks of life. But the learned neological and rationalist professors were too proud and sceptical to regard such works, except to despise them.

“ Religion then,” as an eminent German writer observes, “ in the proper sense of the word, soon became almost entirely unknown. The Bible was neglected in families. To young persons of education or polished manners, it would have been a disgrace so much as to own one. Public worship was deserted ; the Sabbath was profaned by every kind of business, the opening of theatres, ball-rooms, &c. ; and vice and licentiousness increased to a most alarming degree.”

Still, at that fearful period of infidelity, God had some faithful witnesses in Germany. In the lower class of society there were humble disciples of Christ, some praying and weeping in secret places, over the desolations which they witnessed, and some enjoying communion with their Saviour, in a happy ignorance of what was transacting upon the literary and theological stage of Germany.

Early in 1804, a correspondence was opened between the British and Foreign Bible Society and certain influential and pious citizens of Nuremberg, in the Circle of Franconia, for the purpose of prevailing on them to form a similar institution. The offer of one hundred pounds induced them to unite on May 10, 1804 ; and an address was published to awaken their Christian friends throughout Germany and Switzerland, and to rouse them up to an active co-operation in the work. In 1806, the society was transferred to Basle, as a more eligible place for its operations. The same year a Bible Society was formed at Berlin, under the sanction of the king of Prussia ;

and by 1814, more than twelve Bible Societies were formed in the principal cities of Germany. Thus the spiritual restoration of the various provinces of that extensive country commenced; and the first or chief means which God chose to employ was his own blessed Word.

CHAPTER II.

WURTEMBERG, HANOVER, BAVARIA, AND SAXONY.

Education and religion in Wurtemberg—Stutgard Bible Society—Hanover Bible Society—Bavaria Prophesings—Saxony become a Catholic government—Moravians—Dresden, and other cities—Jews' Society—New Testament circulated by Van Ess.

“MORE attention is said to be paid to education, and to ecclesiastical studies in particular, in the kingdom of Wurtemberg, than in any other Protestant state in Germany.” One of the chief articles of the Wurtemberg creed is the identity of bishop and presbyter; so that there is no gradation of ecclesiastical dignity among the pastors: their church discipline is singularly strict, and unusual respect is paid to the Sabbath.

Some of the descendants of the Waldenses are found in this kingdom, and they are distinguished by their simplicity of manners, and many of them by sincere piety.

At Stutgard, the capital, the Wurtemberg Bible Society was formed in 1812, and vigorous efforts have been made to supply every family with the Holy Scriptures.

Hanover is a Protestant state; and in 1814, when it was raised to the dignity of a kingdom, a Bible Society was formed under the patronage of the Duke of Cambridge, and the other members of the regency. Auxiliary societies have been formed at Osnaburg, and various other places in the kingdom; and Luther's version of the Holy Scriptures has been printed and widely circulated, to the incalculable benefit of the population.

Bavaria is a Catholic state; and popery prevails there in its worst form: yet there are a few places which are Protestant, and the pastors are remarkable for their diligence and zeal;

particularly in Bayreuth, Culmbach, Anspach, Augsburg, and Oettingen. They encourage each other by religious exercises, similar to the “Prophesyings,” encouraged by bishop Grindal, in the time of queen Elizabeth.

Saxony will be remembered as the theatre of Luther’s extraordinary labours in defence of the gospel of Christ. His name is still revered, and the majority of the people are Protestants: though, since 1698, when Frederick Augustus, to gain the crown of Poland, abjured his faith, and became a Catholic, the sovereigns have been papists, and their profession has generally been adopted by the courtiers.

Hernhuth, the principal settlement of the Moravians, is in the Saxon part of Upper Lusatia. From this distinguished place it is, that so many pious and indefatigable missionaries have been sent to different parts of the world. It still flourishes, and presents an extraordinary appearance of piety, order, and economy.

At Dresden there has been formed a Bible Society, which is supported by auxiliaries at Hernhuth, Freyberg, and other places, by which God is blessing the people with his saving Word.

At Dresden, Frankfort, Mentz, and Darmstadt, successful exertions have been made, by several societies, to diffuse the pure knowledge of the gospel among the people; and the exertions of the London Jews’ Society, to call the attention of the Israelites to examine the claims of Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah, have not been in vain. Many, it is believed, have been brought to look upon Him whom their fathers pierced, and to believe on him for life eternal.

Leander Van Ess, Catholic professor of theology at Marburg, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, has put in circulation above half a million of copies of the New Testament, which have been received with eagerness: and they must, doubtless, have been blessed to the salvation of many immortal souls.

CHAPTER III.

AUSTRIA, INCLUDING HUNGARY, BOHEMIA, AND MORAVIA.

Bigotry of Austria—Hungarian Bible Society—Evangelical light glimmering in Bohemia and Moravia.

AUSTRIA Proper is a Roman Catholic state, and intolerant bigotry characterizes the government. The Bible, an evangelical ministry, and a religious education, are almost excluded from this country; yet we trust the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in the other German provinces will be the means of endless blessings and of salvation to many of its superstitious and ignorant people.

Hungary belongs to the emperor of Austria; and its people generally are in circumstances but little more favourable to their spiritual instruction than those of the chief province. Upwards of a million of Protestants, however, are included in Hungary. These being almost altogether destitute of the Scriptures, and too poor to purchase them if placed within their reach, their case was represented to the British and Foreign Bible Society, who took measures to supply them with the Word of God. The committee nobly voted £500 for printing and circulating the Scriptures in the Hungarian and Slavonian dialects: this led to the formation of the Hungarian Bible Society at Presburg in 1812, and benefits unspeakable have been conferred by its instrumentality.

Bohemia and Moravia, memorable for the martyrs Huss and Jerome, and for the zealous bands of confessors who arose after their emancipation from earth, are now deeply sunk in ignorance and irreligion. Yet the Moravians, or United Brethren, whose distinguished settlement has been at Hernhuth, near Zittau, on the confines of Bohemia and Silesia, must, notwithstanding, have diffused a sweet savour of divine truth among some of their neighbours; and by their evangelical sentiments and pious zeal, they must have been the means of advancing the cause of scriptural religion; but the jealous policy and popish bigotry of the Austrian government

grievously hinder the maturity, and even the growth, of knowledge and religion as, contained in the blessed Word of God.

CHAPTER IV.

Prussia a Protestant state—Missionary seminary at Berlin—Toleration of the Prussian government—Berlin Bible Society—Barmen Missionary Society—Deputation from the London Missionary Society—Ordination of Missionaries.

PRUSSIA is a Protestant state, in which the Lutheran and the Calvinistic forms are both observed: but other denominations are tolerated. Several of its kings have been zealous infidels; yet many friends to the truth of God have been found in Prussia; and its capital has been famous for its seminary, in which many excellent missionaries to the heathen have been educated, and who have become the worthy agents of several societies in England.

The present kingdom of Prussia contains part of Saxony, and not only the birth-place, but Wittemberg, the honoured theatre, of Luther's immortal services in the church; and Halle, the lovely scene of professor Frank's imperishable labours. Many of the greatest men who have rendered service to the cause of scriptural truth, have been raised up in Prussia, or have found an asylum there, when persecuted in other states on the Continent.

"Berlin is at this moment the capital of enlightened Germany:" and, "for the honour of the Prussian monarchs, it must be observed, that persecution for conscience' sake never formed any part of their conduct; except perhaps in the case of Wolff."

A Bible Society was formed at Berlin in 1805, of which the king became both the patron and a member by a liberal subscription. The national Prussian Bible Society was formed under royal patronage in 1814. Under the same auspices, and we hope with some success, a society has been formed at Berlin for promoting Christianity among the Jews.

Still religion is far from being generally in a flourishing

state in Prussia : but a new spirit of heavenly grace appears to have been poured upon some of the churches in that kingdom, especially in the neighbourhood of Barmen. They have recently sent forth several missionaries to South Africa, with Dr. Philip, the superintendent of the London Missionary Society's stations in that country. A few extracts from the correspondence relating to that transaction afford a delightful illustration of the realities of evangelical truth.

One of the deputation to attend the ordination of these missionaries, the Rev. Andrew Reed, writes as follows : "Dr. Philip, Mr. Joshua Wilson, and myself, left London on the 23rd of June ; on the 25th we were joined by Mr. Wilks at Antwerp, and we reached the place of destination on June the 29th, 1829. Barmen is on the borders of the Rhine, and is situated in what was the kingdom of Wurtemberg, but is now a constituent part of the Prussian dominions. The entire valley embraces the town of Elberfeld, as well as that of Barmen ; and the total population is not less than 60,000. It is a manufacturing district, and manufactures are here evidently elevating the people to higher civilization and to richer comforts. Labour is producing wealth, and wealth, by a fair distribution, is banishing want and rewarding industry. The overgrown proprietor, and the pennyless pauper, are alike unknown here.

" But it is the religious state of this people which is most interesting. They are of the reformed and Lutheran profession united. Their attention is not diverted by religious disputes from religion itself ; for at present they are of one faith and practice. They show a remarkable attachment to the means of religion ; new churches are building because the old ones are overflowing ; and there are comparatively few who do not attend public worship. At a town about ten miles from Barmen, I inquired of the pastor how many churches they had ? he replied, 'three.' I asked what was the attendance : at the three he said, there were about 5000. ' And what,' said I, 'is the population ? ' ' O,' he replied, ' about 5000, exclusive of children.' ' What, then,' I continued, ' do all the people attend public worship ? ' ' Yes, nearly all.'

" There are in the valley thirteen Protestant pastors ; twelve

of whom we had the pleasure of seeing and knowing in our hasty visit. It was our united impression, that at no association of ministers in our own country, had we met a body of men more respectable for talent, more eminent for piety, or more remarkable for usefulness. They have a decided attachment for evangelical truth, without any inclination to the excesses of Antinomianism. The love of Christ was at once their theme and their motive; and this love constrained them to love as brethren, and in charity to seek the salvation of man."

After a most interesting conference, before the examination of the students, as Mr. Reed states, "We were formally introduced to the missionaries. They are John Gottlieb Leipold, Gustavus Adolphus Zahn, Paul Daniel Luckhoff, and Theobald Von Wurmb. The latter was formerly in the army. He fought at the battle of Leipsic as lieutenant, and obtained two medals of honour. He afterwards studied medicine, and obtained a diploma; and subsequently he has become a serious Christian, and chosen to lay his honours at the foot of the cross. Their teachers and pastors spoke of them with entire confidence, as possessed of great simplicity in their views, and much fervour of piety.

"Our greatest surprise was yet to come. In sending forth these four young men, we had, with the exception of Mr. Wilks, considered that the friends were sending out all they had; but the business of the lecture-room was no sooner completed, than we were invited to another department of the house, where we were introduced to seven other young persons pursuing their studies. Still I thought they were training for ministerial labours generally. I put the question accordingly. 'No,' was the reply; 'these are all missionaries, and this is, exclusively, a missionary college.' I believe my companions were as greatly surprised and delighted as myself."

Crowds of people, who could not gain admittance to the place of worship in which the missionaries were ordained, assembled to witness the ceremony. "Upwards of twenty-three ministers were present on the occasion," says the "Missions Blatt," a religious periodical, of which thirteen thousand are published twice a month at Barmen. "The dear English brethren joined in the imposition of hands." Mr. Reed

observes, "It was, altogether, a most interesting and impressive occasion. To the people there was every thing to make it so. It was an ordination service; these were the first missionaries they had sent forth from the valley; Christian brethren from Africa, England, and France, had come over to show a sympathy in their proceedings. They were greatly affected; the men wept even as the women; we all wept together. 'I have never seen any thing like it. It is a little Pentecost,' said a venerable pastor."

The Rev. Ernest Frederick Ball, editor of the "Missions Blatt," says, "The society at Elberfeld was instituted in 1799, in consequence of the formation of the London Missionary Society, and of the missionary zeal awakened in various parts of Germany by the first reports of the exertions of that institution. At first the Elberfeld society was both a Missionary and Tract Society, and, what is still more, a Bible Society also; for before the Bible Society was commenced, the Elberfeld Society distributed Bibles, according to its means, among the poor. From its funds, it sent also contributions to the Missionary Seminary at Berlin, under the superintendence of Mr. Jaenicke; to the Danish Missionary Institution at Halle, whence missionaries have been sent to Tranquebar; to the Moravian Society, and afterwards to the Bible Society."

"The Barmen Society, established in 1818, began by contributing to the funds of these societies; but at length the friends at Barmen were led to found an institution for the education of missionaries. This seminary has been formed several years; and as soon as the first missionaries were ready to depart to the heathen, the Lord opened the door to them, to enter South Africa!! In 1828, the societies of Barmen and Elberfeld were united; the two other societies, that of Cologne and that of Wesel, have joined the union. The societies thus united form the Rhenish Missionary Society. I trust the 30th of June, 1829, has united us for ever, and fastened between London, Paris, and the valley of the Wupper, bands of love that will never be dissolved."

CHAPTER V.

DENMARK.

Various denominations in Denmark—Danish missionaries to the East Indies—Education—Bible Societies.

DENMARK, though not one of the most powerful kingdoms on the Continent, is highly deserving of our Christian regards, for the zeal manifested by its rulers for the universal education of their subjects, and their generous patronage of evangelical missionaries. Denmark is an absolute monarchy; but the king is required to be a Lutheran Protestant, which is the established form of religion. The Calvinists, however, and Mennonites or Baptists, are numerous, but subject to some disabilities.

The Danes, it will be remembered, sent missionaries to the East Indies early in the seventeenth century: they afforded a kind countenance to the Moravian missionaries in Greenland; for whose use they translated the Holy Scriptures. They also assisted them in the work of mercy, as missionaries to the Danish West Indies.

When the Baptist missionaries were discountenanced by the East India Company, at Calcutta, to the everlasting honour of the Danes it deserves to be recorded, Dr. Carey and his colleagues were received and fostered by them at Serampore, a Danish settlement, about sixteen miles from Calcutta, on the other side of the Ganges, where they still reside.

Education is well supported in Denmark, in which they reckon nearly four thousand schools.

Lapland and Iceland have been favoured by the Danes, whose missionaries have been eminently successful, especially among the people of the latter place. The Scriptures have been printed at Copenhagen, in the dialect of Iceland. In 1814, a Bible Society was formed at Copenhagen; and in 1815, the Icelandic Bible Society was instituted. By this means every family in Iceland has been supplied with the blessed Word of God, and their manner of using the Holy Scriptures in their families, in the long evenings, proves their pious regard to the doctrines of salvation.

CHAPTER VI.

SWEDEN AND NORWAY.

Some pious pastors in Sweden—Bible Societies—Sweden adopts the British system of education—Bible given to newly married persons.

RELIGION is not generally prosperous in Sweden and Norway. The Lutheran forms of Christianity have the patronage of the government: but Calvinists, Catholics, and Swedenborgians, are numerous in Sweden. The number of parishes in Sweden is 2,537, some of which are 150 miles in extent, and almost every one has an appointed minister. Much pious zeal has been manifested by some of the Swedish pastors for the best interests of their countrymen: a Bible Society was formed at Stockholm in 1809, and it was revived in 1814; several auxiliaries being formed to support it in co-operating with the society in London, in printing the Scriptures in the languages of Sweden and Lapland. Religious tracts have been actively and extensively circulated in the languages of these countries, by the society at Stockholm, and with manifest benefit to the people.

By the assistance of the society in London, a Bible Society was formed at Abo, in Finland, in 1812, for the printing of the Scriptures in the Finnish language, to which the late emperor of Russia, Alexander, gave a noble donation.

Norway also has been induced to contribute to the advancing cause of divine truth, and a Bible Society has been formed in that country.

Sweden has adopted the British system of education, and knowledge is making considerable progress among the lower classes of the people. There is one custom in Sweden deserving peculiar notice and commemoration, both for its piety and benevolence; that is, the giving of Bibles to newly married persons among the poor: this is done at the expense of the Swedish Bible Society!

CHAPTER VII.

NETHERLANDS, PARTICULARLY HOLLAND.

French war calamitous to religion—Consequents of the battle of Waterloo—Mennonites—United Netherlands Bible Society—Missionary Society.

PREVIOUSLY to the French Revolution in 1790, Holland was estimated to contain 1,578 ministers of the established church, 90 of the Walloon or Protestant church of the United Netherlands, 800 Catholics, 53 Lutherans, 43 Arminians, and 312 Baptists, still called Mennonites. But this country seriously suffered by the French wars. Their invasion of this country greatly injured the cause of religion; but still there are many who appear to be zealous for the gospel.

After the battle of Waterloo in 1815, Holland, before a distinct government, was included in the kingdom of the Netherlands. Belgium is generally Roman Catholic; but Holland is generally Protestant.

The number of denominations, with their congregations, we are not able correctly to ascertain; but Mr. Ward, the missionary, having visited Holland about the year 1818, states, that the Mennonites have about 130 churches, including about 30,000 persons.

The United Netherlands Bible Society, formed at Amsterdam, is a noble institution: it has about 60 auxiliaries in the chief towns, and its income is about £6,000 per annum. The Scriptures have been extensively circulated in the different dialects of these countries, by means of this institution. A Netherlands Missionary Society has been established, by which some zealous labourers in the cause of Christ have been sent to Amboyna and Java. Education, on the British system, is well supported in the Netherlands; and since 1817, the poorer part of the population have been blessed with Sunday-schools.

CHAPTER VIII.

SWITZERLAND AND PIEDMONT.

Catholic and Protestant Cantons—Infidelity—Bible Societies—Evangelical Missionary Society—Dr. Malan—Persecutions—Dissenters—Their persecutions—Godliness increases—Remnant of the Waldenses in Piedmont—Waldensian Bible Society.

SWITZERLAND includes more than twenty independent but confederated cantons; about half of which are Catholic, and the rest Protestant; Calvinistic in doctrine, and Presbyterian in government, as the church of Scotland.

Infidelity raging in France, the lukewarm professors of divinity in Switzerland became inclined to religious speculation, rather than scriptural godliness; and they, with the pastors, generally adopted a system resembling Socinianism. This was especially the case at Geneva; but a better state of things is arising in this lovely and romantic country.

The canton of Berne has been distinguished for activity in the cause of Christ, by circulating the Scriptures, and promoting a missionary spirit. A Bible Society was formed at Basle, in 1804, and others have since been instituted at Berne, Zurich, and several other places.

An Evangelical Missionary Society has been formed at Basle, from which several worthy missionaries have been sent forth, six of whom were ordained, in 1822, to labour among the ignorant people on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

Dr. Malan, an evangelical minister of Geneva, has been for many years a zealous and successful labourer in that city; but not without molestation. On account of his noble stand for the gospel of Christ, “he was deposed from his office, as regent of the college, deprived of his ministerial character in the church, and he is indebted to the indulgence only of the government for the degree of toleration he has enjoyed in being suffered to preach in a chapel which has been built for him without the walls.” Many religious tracts have been composed and circulated in great numbers, both in Switzerland and in France, by Dr. Malan, and chiefly at his own expense. But the visits

of that distinguished preacher to England, have excited a lively interest in favour of the Swiss, and considerable assistance has been rendered to them by British Christians.

Persecution in vexatious forms has arisen in various parts of Switzerland, and some of those ministers who have dared faithfully to preach the gospel, have drawn down upon them the frowns of their lukewarm brethren, whose influence with a worldly, irreligious magistracy has generally prevailed. Thus a very numerous body of Dissenters has arisen and increased; and the pure truth of the gospel of Christ is extensively prevailing, not only by the direct ministry of zealous pastors, but by itinerant preachers, and by several periodical publications, which are eagerly read by the people.

Since 1824, when a “brutal decree” was passed by the government of the Canton of Vaud, persecutions, with imprisonment and banishment of Dissenters, similar to what was endured in England in the seventeenth century, have prevailed in different parts of Switzerland; and their sufferings have called forth the liberal contributions and active sympathy of benevolent Christians in England and in France. A specimen of their trials may be taken from the statement of Dr. Pye Sinit, in a letter dated July 8, 1829: “A respectable citizen, M. Alexander Lenoir, of Villeneuve, a member of one of the churches, and distinguished for his edifying talents in prayer and village-preaching, was requested by several ministers and others, met at Lausanne, November 7, 1828, to visit different places as a home missionary. He set out in about a month; and, when met with a few friends at a prayer-meeting, he was haled to prison for want of bail. On the deposition of a physician, he was removed from the prison to an hospital, and allowed a room with a fire. He was liberated on bail, but two months after condemned to one year’s imprisonment, and the payment of costs. On his appeal, his sentence was changed to a year’s banishment, with payment of costs; but this was ruinous to his wife and three children, as he was a farmer! The alleged crimes for which he suffered are worthy of the apostolic age, as they are thus stated in the record of the court: ‘That on January 5, 1829, he was found by the Juge de Paix, in the house of Buache, along with several other persons not of the

family : that he called himself a missionary of the dissenting churches : that he had been more than a fortnight in going from Villeneuve to Charbonnieres, having stopped in several places : that by his own confession, he had been the guest of M. Solomon Rapin, from January 1 to 5, conducting worship every evening : and particularly that on January 4, there were present seven or eight persons not of the family : that the said Alexander Lenoir is proved to be a partisan of the new religious sect.”” This is one out of many cases of the same character.

Notwithstanding this hostility, vital godliness is rapidly advancing in Switzerland, not only among Dissenters, but among those of the established church. Sunday-schools, and others on the British system, have been established in several cantons, and they are greatly flourishing, auxiliary to the gospel.

Piedmont, the chief theatre of the Waldenses, belongs to the king of Sardinia. His majesty and most of his subjects are bigoted Catholics ; but there is still a remnant of those noble confessors in the valleys near Turin. They are an orderly, pious people, divided into fifteen parishes, with as many pastors. Great attention is paid to the education of their children : but their schools, and even their ministers, have been in a good measure supported by charitable contributions from Protestant states, particularly Great Britain. His majesty George III., in 1768, granted Letters Patent in favour of these Vaudois ; and a sum was collected, and £10,000 was funded for their benefit, by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the interest of which, £292, is annually divided among the pastors.

At La Tour, in 1816, a Waldensian Bible Society was founded, which we trust will be a permanent blessing, not only to those interesting people of the valleys, but also to their Catholic neighbours.

CHAPTER IX.

FRANCE.

Popery occasions the French to become infidels—Napoleon—Louis XVIII.—Deputations from the London Missionary, and British and Foreign Bible Societies—Dr. Bogue's Essay on the New Testament—Charles X.—Revolution—Philip I.—Popish church separated from the state—Toleration—Present state of religion in France—Protestants—Reformed church in France.

RELIGION in France, at the close of the eighteenth century, was almost extinct. The preposterous and superstitious rites of popery had insulted and disgusted the reflecting part of the nation; who, being ignorant of pure scriptural Christianity, became infidels. The observance of the Lord's-day was disallowed by law after the Revolution of 1790, and both the forms and the name of religion were regarded with absolute contempt. Things continued much the same after the commencement of the nineteenth century; but under the government of Napoleon there was a partial restoration of popery, with a measure of toleration granted to the Protestants.

Popery was still more favoured by Louis XVIII. at his restoration, and persecution was partially renewed against the Protestants in the south of France; especially at Nismes, where dreadful outrages were committed, with much bloodshed. Still there appeared scarcely any efforts made to extend the saving knowledge of the gospel of Christ, till after the London Missionary Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society, sent deputations to visit and excite the Protestant churches to form Auxiliary Societies to co-operate with them. Bible Societies were established in many places among the Protestants; and considerable excitement was produced by the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, and Dr. Bogue's "Essay on the New Testament," proving the divinity of Christianity.

Serious impediments to the advancement of evangelical religion were still in existence, and rather increased under the government of the bigoted Charles X., who became the dupe of the priests and Jesuits. The intolerance of popery became every day more oppressive; and Charles was counselled to set

at nought the rights of the people, till they rose against him as a nation, determining to humble the intolerant priesthood, and rid themselves of a despotic king. This they accomplished in three days, after much bloodshed, on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of July, 1830.

The duke of Orleans, now Philip I., was called to the throne, and a new order of things immediately arose, to the admiration of every Protestant nation. The Article of the French Charter, which declared the “ Roman Catholic and Apostolic Religion to be the Religion of the State,” was abolished, and in its stead the following was adopted: “ The Ministers of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Religion, professed by the majority of Frenchmen, together with those of other Christian doctrines, shall be supported at the public expense.”

Popery has thus received a decisive blow in France. Religion has been detached from the state, and the beauties of holiness are beginning to appear among those who have been mourning and labouring in secret.

A few extracts from the published letters of intelligent Protestant ministers will convey to our readers a tolerable idea of the present state of religion in France. “ Christianity had not more enemies in France under the old government than it has under the new. With us Christianity is always blended with catholicism, and catholicism with the priests by whom it is taught. But as the priests are generally opposed to the new order of things, and as they boldly avow their opposition, it follows that the liberals, who form the more enlightened part of the nation, conceive a hatred for every kind of religion, and become infidels, as a consequence of their political system. They consider the gospel of God our Saviour as responsible for all the faults committed by some intriguing and ambitious priests.”

“ It ought also to be said, that the French Catholic clergy neglect no means of exciting the people.”—“ Not a single Catholic priest, at least so far as I know, has become Protestant since the Revolution. We know only of some villages in the north of France, and some workmen at St. Quentin, and in the neighbourhood of Lyons, who have abandoned the Roman church to embrace the Reformed.”

"These details will suffice to show that the gospel is still far from meeting with a favourable reception among the mass of the French nation. But if, from this general view, we pass to the particular condition of the Protestants of France, the prospect is much more animating. Of late years, a new spirit has pervaded the reformed churches of our country. We have the happiness to reckon a large number of evangelical pastors; and the labours of many of them have been abundantly blessed. At Paris, too, Christians are labouring with success. Lately many Sunday-schools have been opened in that vast capital; and the number of children who attend them begins to be considerable. Many laymen, of distinguished piety and learning, are at the head of these schools. Chapels are also opened, where the gospel is preached by pastors who are not paid by the state. My friends write to me that these chapels are always filled with hearers; and among those who resort to them are men of science and learning, and officers of government."

"The religious benevolent societies of the Protestants continue to be supported by many of our churches. The Society of Missions, particularly, excites lively interest in France. A new missionary, M. Pelissier, has gone to join the three other French missionaries now at the Cape of Good Hope."

"Many new religious publications have been commenced in France. Some friends of the gospel have issued a religious journal, entitled, 'The Sower,' which is published twice a week. This is an important enterprise for us; for the journals in this country exert a powerful influence upon the people."

An English Protestant minister in Paris writes, "Since the Revolution, we have opened several chapels, several schools, and have also commenced several meetings in different quarters of Paris. After having filled a place of worship near the Bouvelard des Italiens, the most fashionable part of Paris, we have rented a large hall on the Bouvelards. Every Sabbath morning, we have here a most respectable, steady, and serious auditory. Many Protestants of the first rank of society, who very seldom attended on public worship, are constant in their attendance here; and many Catholics are delighted with the means afforded them of informing and edifying themselves. Of each class, not a few have felt and evidenced the power of

the truth of the gospel applied to the conscience and the heart by the Holy Ghost. A Sunday-school is formed here, and the children are taught by ladies and gentlemen, who are zealous for the diffusion of the gospel. The friends who attend at this chapel subscribe, towards the general expenses of the chapels and schools, about £300 per annum. This is the beginning of the voluntary support of the gospel ministry by the French, who are accustomed to look to the government for every thing.”

“ Our great anxiety at this moment is, for the Fauxbourg du Temple ; a quarter peopled by poor workmen and their families, living in the grossest ignorance. After the Revolution, we began worship in a small room. The hearers soon overflowed : their children accompanied them, and were presented for instruction : their numbers and their interest increased rapidly and regularly. We were obliged to change and enlarge our plans and accommodations, to establish Sunday-schools, day-schools, evening-schools ; and at this hour more than six hundred scholars, of both sexes and of all ages, are inscribed on our registers, and receive instruction, or are promised admission. God has provided us with Christian masters and mistresses : they open and close the exercise of each school with prayer, and teach the scholars both to read and to understand the Scriptures. The interest, intelligence, and progress, of the scholars and hearers, are very cheering. The municipal authorities already appreciate our efforts, and offer us every facility and protection, from the usefulness of our religion. Other efforts are in progress ; among which are the translation of valuable works of doctrinal and practical divinity ; aiding pious young men in their academical studies ; promoting the circulation of Bibles and Tracts ; the establishment of Scripture readers ; and the opening of chapels for Protestant worship, and the faithful preaching of the Word of God. These efforts are independent of those of the Bible Society, the Continental Society, Tract and School Societies, and other public institutions. Besides, a plan is in progress for placing a public library in every one of the forty thousand communes, or parishes, into which the kingdom of France is divided !”

But it is from the “Reformed Church of France” that we are led to expect the most vigorous efforts to evangelize the kingdom. This, according to a statistical account furnished in 1828, consisted of eighty-five Consistorial churches; which, at the rate assigned by law, of 6000 souls for each church, gives an aggregate of 510,000. It has, besides, eleven oratories, which appear to be smaller communities than those which would warrant the formation of a Consistorial church. Probably the whole body of Protestants in France, under this denomination, may amount to one million persons! Among these there are four hundred and thirty-eight edifices for public worship,—three hundred and five pastors,—four hundred and fifty-one Bible Societies and Associations,—one hundred and twenty-four Missionary Societies,—and fifty-nine Tract Societies and Depositories. Such a variety of evangelical means and ministers in these times, under the Divine blessing, must be effectual in producing an amount of benefit altogether incalculable, for time and eternity!

CHAPTER X.—ENGLAND.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Peculiar qualifications necessary to describe the present state of religion in the church of England—Its constitution—Different classes of its members—Testimony of bishop Hobart—Of Mr. Legh Richmond—Of Mr. Acaster—Remuneration of curates—Consequences of the trade in “church livings”—Testimony of the Christian Observer—Clergy differ in religious opinions—High Churchmen—Bishops Ryder and the Sumners—Number of evangelical clergymen—Their exemplary and beneficial labours—District Visiting Societies—Scott’s Commentary—Eminent writers.

ENGLAND has been most highly favoured since the commencement of the nineteenth century, in the increase of both the privileges and the power of religion. Many, even of its most intelligent and devout professors, have been struck with astonishment, while contemplating what God has wrought among all classes of Christians, who believe the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

Emotions, both seriously painful and truly pleasing, must fill the mind, in giving a fair and correct exhibition of the state of religion in the church of England. Accurate information, uncompromising fidelity, and evangelical candour, are indispensable to guide us in treating of this section of the Christian community ; for no portion of the professing church presents to view, anomalies so many, so strange, and so unscriptural, as those which are manifest and the subject of general complaint, in the English establishment.

To be able to form a tolerable estimate of religion in the national communion, it will be indispensable to keep in mind the peculiar constitution of the church of England : that it is a privileged corporation, chartered by act of parliament, having the sovereign for the time being as its head : and also to consider its practical influence in the nation.

Divine influence, it is clearly evident, has been graciously afforded to many, both of the clergy and laity in this communion, in common with those of other denominations ; but still there is a very large majority who cherish and express, from the press and the pulpit, the bitterest hostility to the pure doctrines of the gospel, as they were preached at the Reformation. That we may give no offence to any, Episcopalian writers of unquestionable and acknowledged reputation shall be our sole vouchers concerning this church ; and the testimonies shall be given by writers of our times, and in their own words.

Dr. Hobart, “Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York,” who had not only read of the church of England, but on a visit to this country, in 1824, had seen and observed it in actual operation, having returned to America, published a “Discourse,” in which he says, “Look at the most important relation which the church can constitute,—that which connects a pastor with his flock. In the church of England, this connexion is absolute property. The livings are in the gift of individuals, of the government, or corporate bodies;* and can be, and are, bought and sold like other

* From the “Clerical Guide,” it is collected, that of 10,872 church livings in England and Wales, sixty-eight only are in the gift of the inhabitants ! All the rest are at the disposal of government, individuals, prelates, universities, and public bodies.

property.* Hence, like other property, they are used for the best interest of the holders, and are frequently made subservient to the secular views of individuals and families.† And they present an excitement to enter into the holy ministry, with too great an admixture of worldly motives, and with a spirit often falling short of that pure and disinterested ardour, which supremely aims at the promotion of God's glory and the salvation of mankind. The connexion thus constituted, entirely independent of the choice or wishes of the congregation, is held entirely independent of them. And such are the gross and lamentable obstructions to the exercise of discipline, from the complicated provisions and forms of their ecclesiastical law, that common, and even serious, clerical irregularities are not noticed.”

* This shocking traffic in the souls of men is notoriously common; and the whole history of religious profession does not exhibit such enormities in the presence of the opened Scriptures, as is presented by this system. The Morning Chronicle of July 13, 1824, says, “The church livings in Essex, sold on the first inst. by Mr. Robins, of Regent-street, were not the absolute advowsons, but the next presentations, contingent on the lives of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. P. L. Wellesley, aged thirty-six and twenty-five years respectively, and were as under:—

PLACE.	DESCRIPTION.	ESTIMATED		
		ANNUAL VALUE.	AGE OF INCUMB-	SOLD FOR.
			ENT.	
Wanstead	Rectory.....	£650.....	62.....	£2,400
Woodford	Ditto	1,200.....	58.....	4,200
Great Paindon ...	Ditto.	500.....	63.....	1,600
Fifield.	Ditto.	525.....	59.....	1,520
Rochford.	Ditto.	700.....	62.....	2,000
Filstead.....	Vicarage.....	400.....	50.....	900
Roydon	Ditto.	200.....	46.....	580

“ The biddings appeared to be governed by the age and health of the incumbents, residence, situation, and other local circumstances, with which the parties interested seemed to be well acquainted.”

“ St. James's Chronicle,” of Nov. 20 to 23, 1830, contains the following articles of “ Property for sale,” and specified in numbers from 1 to 79. It is the advertisement of only one clerical agent.

20 Advowsons, income from £300 to £2000 per annum.

12 Next Presentations, income from £150 to £700 per annum.

45 Other Livings for sale or exchange, including “ a sinecure of two parishes in Ireland,” for which “ a dispensation has been granted;” and two livings, one of £700, and the other of £1000, per annum.”

" Advance higher in the relations that subsist in the church, to those which connect a bishop with his diocese. The commission of the bishop, his episcopal authority, is conveyed to him by the bishops who consecrate him. But the election of the person to be thus consecrated, is nominally in the dean and chapter of the cathedral of the diocese ; and theoretically in the king, who gives the dean and chapter permission to elect the person, and only the person, whom he names ; and thus in the actual operation of what is more an aristocratical than a monarchical government, the bishops are appointed by the cabinet or the prime minister ; and hence, with some most honourable exceptions, principally recent, the appointments have notoriously been directed with a view to parliamentary interest. Almost all the prelates that have filled the English sees, have owed their advancement not solely, as it ought to have been, and as in our system it must generally be, to their qualifications for the office ; but to the secular interest, extraneous from spiritual or ecclesiastical considerations."*

To many, the language of Dr. Hobart may seem too censorious ; but his testimony is lamentably true ; and the facilities for obtaining ordination are surprising. Piety is seldom a recommendation, but often a hinderance, especially if it be connected with an avowal of evangelical sentiment. The late amiable Legh Richmond, in a letter to his son, in 1820, observes, " The national church groans and bleeds, 'from the crown of its head to the sole of its feet,' through the daily intrusion of unworthy men into its ministry. Patrons, parents, tutors, colleges, are annually pouring a torrent of incompetent youth into the church, and loading the nation with spiritual guilt. Hence souls are neglected and ruined—bigotry and ignorance prevail—church pride triumphs over church godliness—and the establishment is despised, deserted, and wounded."†

Naturally might it be expected, that from such a system in operation, the power of religion in the nation would be exceedingly low ; and this would have been the lamentable case, but

* "The United States of America compared with some European Countries," &c., by Dr. Hobart, p. 18-25.

† Memoirs of Legh Richmond, by Grimshawe, p. 461, 462.

for the zealous labours of the Dissenters and Methodists. On this subject the testimony of a highly respectable beneficed clergyman, of the city of York, deserves especial regard. Mr. Acaster says, “ The bishop of Winchester tells us, in his late charge at Llandaff, that out of two hundred and thirty-four incumbencies, into which the diocese is divided, only ninety-seven parishes enjoy the advantage of clergy, incumbents, and curates, actually resident ! Taking the curates to amount to one half of the whole, which will be found, I believe, to be generally correct, then only about forty-eight of the two hundred and thirty-four incumbents are actually resident in their parishes.”

“Conceiving this to be a fair specimen of the state of every diocese in the kingdom, what an alarming reflection is it calculated to excite ! Nearly four-fifths of the parishes throughout the whole kingdom have no resident incumbent ; consequently, near four-fifths of the people are left, as it respects their paid and legal pastor, as sheep without a shepherd. They have no incumbent to watch over them, to feed them, or to care for their best and highest interests ; none to whom they can resort for advice, counsel, or succour, in all their trials, sorrows, temptations, and difficulties ; none to instruct, to soothe, and comfort them, on the bed of affliction and death ; and none to assist them in their preparation for a boundless and never-ending eternity. Their legal, paid, rightful, and most solemnly avowed instructors are fled. Some they never see or hear, for five—ten—fifteen—twenty, and even thirty years together. Some, again, are born, brought up, marry, have families, live, and die, and enter into eternity, without ever once either seeing or hearing their legal teacher. I speak of numerous facts in all the above instances within my own knowledge, and of several incumbents whose churches and parishes I can see from the place in which I sit and write ; so that in regard to the incumbents, there are millions through the land who have literally no man that careth for their souls. What a consolation ! What a fearful consolation ! ”

“And is all this known, and yet tolerated ? Yes, it is known, it is tolerated ; it is often facilitated by those whose duty it is to stand in the gap ; and what is still more fearful and alarm-

ing, it is barred from remedy by the dispensations and licences of our spiritual rulers."

"If any thing can unloose the binding sinews of a state ; if any thing can weaken and destroy that religious principle which is the only sure bond of its peace and security ; if any thing can arouse the displeasure of Almighty God against it, alienate the affections of the people from it, (the established church,) render it loathsome in their estimation, make them desire its downfall, and raise their shout,—Down with it ! down with it ! even to the ground ! there is, then, in this sad dereliction of principle and of duty, a cause afforded, and which, without a speedy remedy, is sufficient of itself to effect eventually the ruin of both. Perhaps half the population of the country have already left the establishment, and ranged themselves under the standard of dissent. And if we add to this the very slight attention paid to religion by a great majority of the rest, we shall soon perceive the critical situation in which we stand, and how very easy a concurrence of events may turn the scale against us, and involve both the church and the state in one and the same overwhelming ruin."*

Non-resident incumbents, having obtained, in many instances, several livings ; and if related to bishops or noble families, other "valuable preferment in the church," in some instances, to the number of five or six, the whole amounting to several thousands a year value, employ curates "to do duty for them." These labourers amount to the number of four thousand and ninety-five, as appears by the report made by the bishops to the privy council in 1827, and their average salary is about seventy-four pounds per annum ! Such is the miserable pittance with which "the superior clergy," according to the present system of the church of England, reward their humbler brethren, who perform for them the clerical duties, which many of them are known to abhor. How contrary to all our ideas of equity and uprightness is this mercenary conduct ! And how utterly repugnant to the righteous institutions, and to the benevolent spirit, of Christianity !

Violations of the duty of the Christian ministry, so flagrant

* The Church in Danger from Herself, &c., by John Acaster, vicar of St. Helen's, York.

as these testimonies declare, demonstrate the moral unfitness of many of the clergy for their assumed office. But this is observed to be the natural consequence of the system, which deprives the people of their right to choose their own ministers, and makes church livings mere articles of property, and to serve as convenient revenues for the younger sons of our nobility and gentry. Nor is this the whole of the evil; it affords the daring advocates of infidelity the most powerful arguments with which to assail Christianity, through the corruptions of its professors.

Besides, many of the clergy are known to be incompetent to make the sermons which they read to their people, and they procure them from certain booksellers, written or lithographed, as we see advertised. This subject is seriously lamented by a clerical writer, in the "Christian Observer" for this month, (Jan. 1832.) He says, "Almost every dissenting community has its theological seminary—and the advanced state of public information, the progress of popery, infidelity, and literary irreligion, the inroads to fanaticism, and the extension of schools of every class—all require high professional competency in the clergy of the established church. And yet to this hour there is no appointed seat of theological training for our clerical candidates. The universities afford the basis of a solid education, and require such a general knowledge of sacred literature as may be expected from lay as well as professional students: but they go no further, and the graduate must glean, where and how he can, the great mass of what is necessary to the efficient discharge of his function. The Word of God says, 'Not a novice;' but novices, so far as respects any public provision for instruction, must be not a few of our candidates for holy orders; and as the bishop can ordain only the best he can get, novices are every day thrust into our parishes to take the oversight of souls, and often with less scriptural information even to compose a sermon, or to follow up the details of pastoral duties, than falls to the share of many a well-taught national school-boy."

Though all the clergy subscribe the same creeds and articles of religion, and read the same forms of prayer, their published writings prove, that every diversity of sentiment in religion is

held by individuals among them : and this is regretted as past remedy, while the present system of patronage and trading in church livings is allowed to exist. Mr. Acaster complains, that “great difference exists among her ministers on some important doctrines of religion, dangerous to the souls of men, and inimical to the peace and stability of the church.”* It is seriously deplored by many of the pious clergy, as a well-known fact, that no communion is so torn and agitated with extravagant doctrinal speculations, at the present time, as the church of England !

Orthodoxy in the Established Church, is peculiarly claimed by a very large majority of the clergy, generally denominated High Churchmen. These are mostly latitudinarian in their principles, and differing widely in point of faith ; denouncing the distinguishing doctrines of the Reformation, they are chiefly zealous for the external polity of the church, and opposers of their evangelical brethren, whom they commonly represent as enemies to the Establishment, and uniting with Dissenters in promoting its overthrow. This class, including the dignitaries, have uniformly been unfriendly to the Bible Society, and many of them its avowed and determined enemies.

Evangelical truth has, however, an increased number of holy and devoted friends in the Church of England, over whose corruptions they sincerely mourn, and it is believed that this body is still increasing. God has graciously poured out of his

* Mr. James, an Independent minister of the highest reputation, remarks, in a recent publication, in reply to an attack on his principles, “ No one can for a moment doubt, that the church of England comprehends within her pale persons holding the widest possible variety of religious opinions : Socinians : Arians ; Arminians, from Pelagianism to the modified Arminianism of Tillotson ; Baxterians ; Calvinists of all grades, from the Supra-lapsarian of Dr. Hawker to the more moderate views of Davenant and South ; Hutchinsonians ; Baptism Regeneration advocates, and their opponents ; Swedenborgians ; the followers of Joanna Southcote ; Modern Millenarians ; believers in the unconsciousness of the soul from death to the resurrection ; followers of Mr. Irving on the peccability of Christ’s human nature, &c. &c. It is known as an undoubted fact, that the error which has done the greatest mischief in our communities has been principally cherished by the works of Dr. Crisp and Dr. Hawker ; both of them divines of the church of England. Dr. Hawker’s books and converts have infested our churches with a kind of pestilence, and are perverting the minds of multitudes within the pale of the establishment.” “ Dissent and the Church,” by the Rev. J. A. James, p. 76.

Spirit upon them, and qualified them for their spiritual work. But these have arisen in opposition to the ecclesiastical system of that church, from the rulers of which not a few of them, especially curates, have been called to endure persecutions. Many excellent pastors have been brought forward, by the zeal and liberality of individuals, who have educated pious young men, and purchased livings, or built chapels for them. The "Chapels of Ease" in populous parishes, amount to 1,500; besides about 200 new churches, built principally with the late parliamentary grant of £1,500,000; and popular pious clergymen have in many instances succeeded in obtaining preferment to them.

The elevation to the episcopacy of the diligent and evangelical Dr. Ryder, in 1812, and of the two Sumners, one in 1826, the other in 1828, has been, we trust, an unspeakable blessing to the country; though their promotion was not on account of their piety or ministerial qualifications, but by interest and influence near the throne. These good men preach frequently; they give their support to the Bible Society; and they have generally promoted pious clergymen in their respective diocesses.

Of the number of this evangelical class of the clergy, it is difficult to form a correct estimate; but those who are intimate with the affairs of the Church Missionary Society, and other societies connected with the church, compute them at about twelve hundred; some others reckon them at about two thousand; and the Rev. D. Wilson has given it as his opinion, that there are about three thousand pious clergymen in the Establishment.

Religion, in the church of England, flourishes chiefly among this class; in which are to be found some of the most excellent examples of practical godliness, pastoral diligence, and evangelical faithfulness. A great proportion of these are among the ministers of chapels, which have been erected by individuals in or near populous vicinities, and licensed by the bishops, allowing the people to choose their own ministers, who are supported by the free contributions of those who enjoy their services. These excellent men take the liveliest interest in the Bible Society, and other institutions for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ among men. Many of their plans they

have adopted from the Dissenters, both in the formation of various associations for the promotion of religion, and the more retired oversight of their own particular congregations : so that in very many instances, especially in London and in populous districts of the country, they have departed widely from the spirit and forms of the church, and have become practical Dissenters ; having like them prayer-meetings, and various other devotional exercises, for the increase of personal and social religion. Several of the bishops have denounced these exercises as Methodistical ; and many pious curates have been dismissed from their situations by their superiors on account of their active zeal in seeking the salvation of their people. Still it is believed these devoted men increase : may they increase a hundred fold, blessed of God their Saviour, and made a public blessing !

In 1828, a “District Visiting Society,” similar to the “Christian Instruction Society,” formed by the Dissenters in 1825, (See Book IX,) was formed by some of the pious Churchmen. Several of the pious clergy in London and its vicinity, in Birmingham, and Sheffield, and other places, have begun to adopt some of its plans : but as they appear so uncanonical, not having episcopal sanction, much caution is observed. Still a few have commenced operations, employing laymen as Tract distributors, visitors of the sick, and some as Scripture readers and expounders. O that these works of evangelical benevolence were universal, and that Churchmen and Dissenters were co-operating in so glorious a cause as saving, instrumentally, the perishing souls of men. The necessity for such operations will appear most affecting, from the “Address” of the Rev. W. Thompson, minister of a new church in London, and one of the foremost in every good work : it was published at the formation of a “District Association,” Jan. 8, 1830. “Amongst a population of above 50,000 immortal souls, what proportion of these are in the habit of attending public worship ! In the churches of St. Luke and St. Barnabas, and the chapels connected with our Dissenting brethren of every denomination, accommodations for one-fourth of the population are not provided. From the families already visited, it is a lamentable fact, that two out of three thousand have been

found destitute of the Holy Scriptures, and unaccustomed to attend any place of divine worship.” We believe that this is but a correct portrait yet of many places in Great Britain.

Among the evangelical clergy of this century, there are three especially who have contributed imperishable treasures to the church of God, by their invaluable writings. Mr. Thomas Scott, in his “Commentary on the Scriptures;” Mr. Horne, in his “Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures;” and Mr. Simeon, in his “Homilies on the whole Scriptures,” designed as plans of sermons for the assistance of the clergy. But there are many others, whose writings have been eminently serviceable in the cause of evangelical religion; among whom we must not omit to mention, Dr. Paley, Mr. Newton, Mr. Cecil, Mr. Milner, Mr. Bickersteth, Mr. D. Wilson, Mr. Townsend, and bishop John Bird Sumner.

Laudable and Christian zeal is manifested by the evangelical clergy of the establishment; for while they co-operate with Dissenters in several of the great institutions, they support the Church Missionary Society, and the Jews’ Society, besides the old chartered Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. See Book IX.

The national schools connected with the established church, are reported in the Congregational Magazine for 1820, to have contained 297,596 scholars, and there are believed to be about half as many more in their Sunday-schools.

CHAPTER XI.—DISSENTERS.

ENGLAND CONTINUED.

Christianity never exclusively possessed by any denomination—Common prejudice against Dissenters—Testimony of bishop Watson—Of another clergyman—Excluded from the national universities—Support all their own institutions, colleges, and chapels—Foremost in evangelical labours.

CHRISTIANITY has never been possessed exclusively by any denomination of its professors. “ All who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity ” are his chosen disciples, whatever may be their evident peculiarities: and both charity and truth demand,

that we seek out and recognise the real church of God wherever we may find it, irrespective of denominational distinctions.

Prejudice, the inspiration of an evil spirit, with not a few otherwise excellent persons, will not allow them to “judge righteous judgment” in this respect. They look upon Dissenters from the mere human impositions of the national church, which all parties acknowledge are not required by the Scriptures, as lovers of dissension; and consequently they regard them, and speak of them, as factious sectaries, scarcely deserving to be tolerated.

There are, however, Churchmen, and even clergymen, possessing intelligence and candour sufficient to qualify them to bear testimony to the truth in relation to Dissenters. Bishop Watson, speaking of the dissenting ministers in his letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, in 1783, says, “I cannot look upon them as inferior to the clergy of the establishment, either in learning or morals.” Another of these unprejudiced men says, “I am no Dissenter myself; neither have I the honour nor disgrace—an opponent may take his choice of the term—of numbering five Nonconformists among my personal acquaintance. It may procure me a more favourable hearing with their enemies if I state, that I am a clergyman myself, lineally descended, for nearly two centuries, from clerical ancestors; some of whom were, in their degree, confessors for the church of England, during the ascendancy of Cromwell, and the reign of James II. But, as a member and minister of the universal church of Christ, I dare not be so ungrateful to the dissenting body, as to forget their past and present services to the general cause of Christianity. Many of their community have shone, in their respective æras, as the light and glory of the Catholic church. As composers of what Dr. Johnson calls ‘Hortatory Theology,’ their claims to our gratitude may be equalled, but never have been surpassed, by episcopalian writers. No library can make any pretensions to completeness, in the department of practical divinity, unless it be enriched by the works of Howe, Owen, Edwards, Baxter, Henry, Doddridge, Watts, and many others of scarcely less inferior name. Of our most useful and popular commentaries on the entire Scriptures, the greater number has

proceeded from the pens of Nonconformists. In theological science, the names of Lardner, Chandler, Campbell, Macknight, Leland, and Jeremiah Jones, appear among our standard divines. Of living writers, it is sufficient to enumerate Ewing, Townley, Watson, Douglas, Adam Clarke, Wardlaw, Fletcher, Boothroyd, Foster, and Chalmers. Let it further be considered, that the doctrinal system of their practical writers is substantially the same with the formularies of our church. In truth, the leading divines in both communities have, for centuries, made common cause against the direct enemies or perversers of the gospel. They have fought in the same ranks, and partaken of the same conquests. And it is but an act of grateful acknowledgment to Dr. J. P. Smith to remark, that his recent work on the Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, in reply to Mr. Belsham, is, as a competent judge (Mr. Hartwell Horne) has pronounced it to be, ‘one of those biblical works of which the student will never regret the purchase, and unquestionably the most elaborate defence and proof of the Deity of Jesus Christ extant in our language.’ From my own acquaintance with the writings of Dissenters, I gather that they are quite as good judges as ourselves of the nature and obligations of Christianity, and of the order and discipline of the Christian church. They have access to the same means of information; and of these they have availed themselves with extraordinary assiduity and success. This circumstance deserves the more honourable mention, as they are necessarily excluded from the privileged seats of learning. It will, however, be recollecteced, that bishop Warburton, the greatest master of human learning that in modern times has adorned the English episcopacy, went to no university. The author of the Divine Legation of Moses began life as an attorney’s clerk, and continued in the legal profession till he was twenty-five years of age! In this place it may be advisable to remind such as need the information, that two of our most eminent prelates, archbishop Secker, and that unequalled analogist bishop Butler, were severally the offspring of Dissenters, and by Dissenters were they baptized! They were also educated, together with archbishop Horte, by a Nonconformist minister, whose investigation

of the canon of the New Testament is the established work on that subject; and, as such, has been republished at the Clarendon press."*

Our readers should remember, that while Dissenters are excluded from the national endowed seats of learning at the English universities, and labour under many inequitable impositions, they build their own colleges and places of worship, and yet are compelled, equally with churchmen, to contribute to support the church of England, to whose system of ecclesiastical policy they conscientiously object as unscriptural, and from which they derive no advantage. Yet the Dissenters have greatly increased. The Congregational Magazine for 1829 contains valuable religious statistical tables, in which were reported 7904 congregations of Dissenters, in England and Wales, including 388 Roman Catholics. This, however, is believed to be far short of the number, as correct returns had not been made by any denomination except the Methodists, for doing which their system of union affords peculiar facilities. That Magazine, for 1830, has reported about 50 congregations more of the Independents, making upwards of 1700; and both they and the Baptists have nearly an equal number of other preaching stations, connected with their regular congregations. The Dissenters had, in 1829, in their Sunday-schools, as reported by the Congregational Magazine, 700,497 scholars; but this is believed to be far below the number instructed in England and Wales.

Truth constrains us to admit, that to the Dissenters belongs the high honour of being foremost in adopting means for the diffusion of the knowledge of Christ, throughout Great Britain and Foreign nations, by Missionary, Sunday-school, Bible, Tract, and other institutions. More particular information on these subjects our readers will find in Book IX.

* *Reflections on Recent Occurrences at Lichfield; including an Illustration of the Opinions of Samuel Johnson, LL.D., on Slavery, and the General Distribution of the Scriptures; addressed to the Rev. T. Gisbone, M. A. Prebendary of Durham.* Hatchard and Son, 1826

I.—CONGREGATIONAL INDEPENDENTS.

Independents ranked first among Dissenters—Their number—Their local efforts to extend the gospel—Eminent writers—Missionary Institutions—Theological seminaries—Homerton—Wymondley—Exeter—Rotherham—Highbury—Newport Pagnell—Airedale—Hackney—Blackburn—North Wales, New-town—Newaddluyd—Glasgow—Rowell—More Private Seminaries.

Among the Dissenters from the hierarchy of the church of England, the Congregational Independents are ranked the first; as being considered the most numerous, and the most respectable, both for learning and orthodoxy. Perfect accuracy has not yet been made in their returns: but their regular churches, reported in the Congregational Magazine for 1829 and 1830, corrected in successive numbers, amount to 1,370 in England, and to 380 in Wales; making a total of 1,750 churches, exclusive of about 250 churches, in which the high Calvinistic notions of the late Dr. Hawker and Mr. Huntington are taught, and which are not reckoned among the regular body. It is also to be observed, that many of the Independent churches have stations in their several vicinities, especially in the neglected villages and hamlets of the country, for the diffusion of the knowledge of Christ, by Sunday-schools and preaching. In these places, worship is conducted generally by gifted laymen of the different congregations, assisted by their pastors. County associations have been formed by the ministers and churches of the denomination, for the promotion of the gospel in their respective neighbourhoods; and their labours in this manner have been eminently blessed of God.

Many of the pastors of the Independent denomination, in this century, have been highly distinguished, both as scholars and popular writers: among these we must mention the Rev. Drs. Williams, J. P. Smith, Boothroyd, Bogue, Wardlaw, Henderson, Robert Morrison, (Missionary, and translator of the Bible into Chinese,) Milne, (his late colleague,) Bennett, H. F. Burder, J. Fletcher, Payne, Raffles, Collyer, and J. Morison; and the Rev. Messrs. G. Burder, Jay, Ewing, Orme, J. A. James, East, Vaughan, Morell, and Mr. C. Taylor, Editor of Calmet, Mr. J. Taylor, translator of Herodotus,

and the late Mr. W. Greenfield, Editor of the Oriental department of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

How far the Independents have manifested zeal for the advancement of the evangelization of the world, may be judged of further by referring to the accounts of the London, Home Missionary, Irish Evangelical, and Christian Instruction Societies, with others, in which they cordially co-operate with other denominations. See Book IX.

An educated ministry has ever been an object of peculiar solicitude with the Independents, and they have ever been distinguished for their number of learned men and eminent pastors. For this purpose numerous seminaries have been instituted, as we have already noticed in reviewing the eighteenth century. Those which are now flourishing we shall here briefly notice.

1. Homerton Old College, near London. This institution commenced in 1730; the Congregational Fund Board was united with its committee; and in 1754 they opened a large house at Mile End as their academy. In 1768 the institution was removed to Homerton, to a copyhold mansion, which was rebuilt in 1822, at an expense of about ten thousand pounds. The number of students is twenty, who are allowed a course of study during six years: the Rev. J. Pye Smith, D.D., and the Rev. W. Bishop, are its present tutors.

2. Wymondley College, Herts, originated in the munificence of William Coward, Esq., an opulent merchant in London, who left a large property to trustees, for the education of young men for the ministry, and other religious purposes. It was originally placed under the care of Dr. Doddridge, at Northampton; but upon his death, in 1751, it was removed to Daventry, under the care of Dr. Ashworth. In 1789 it was again removed to Northampton, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Horsey; and in 1799 it was removed to Wymondley, where it now flourishes under the joint tutorship of the Rev. T. Morell, and the Rev. W. Hull.

3. Western Academy, Exeter, arose from the zeal of the Congregational Fund Board of London, to destroy the Arian heresy in the West. This seminary was established at St. Mary Ottery, in 1752, under the Rev. John Lavington, and in several other towns, to meet the convenience of successive

tutors. For many years it remained at Axminster, under the tutorship of the Rev. James Small; on whose resignation it was removed to Exeter, under the joint tutorship of the Rev. George Payne, LL. D., and the Rev. Jonathan Glyde.

4. Rotherham Independent College, near Sheffield, Yorkshire, originated in a society which was formed in 1756. In 1766 the academy commenced, having the Rev. James Scott for its tutor. The Rev. Edward Williams, D. D., and the Rev. James Bennett, D. D., have been among its able tutors; but it is now under the care of the Rev. Thomas Smith, M. A., and the Rev. William Perrot.

5. Highbury College, Islington, arose out of the exertions of some zealous lay gentlemen in 1778, who established an institution, called "The Evangelical Academy." An academical house was taken at Mile End, and the students were placed under the instructions of the Rev. Stephen Addington, D. D. In 1791, the establishment was removed to Hoxton, where it flourished under the care of the Rev. Robert Simpson, the Rev. William Harris, LL. D., the Rev. H. F. Burder, D. D., and other eminent men. The growing importance of this institution rendered a more commodious situation necessary, and the Treasurer, Thomas Wilson, Esq., gave two thousand guineas, the price of a piece of ground at Islington, to commence the erection of a new college, which has been completed, at an expense of more than £20,000. This establishment, which receives forty students, was opened in October, 1826. The term of study is four years, and the present tutors are the Rev. Dr. Henderson, and the Rev. Robert Halley.

6. Newport Pagnel Evangelical Institution was formed in 1783, very greatly under the influence of Mr. Cowper, the poet, and that amiable clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Newton. It has continued to prosper, and is now under the care of the Rev. T. P. Bull, son of its first Tutor.

7. Airedale College, Undercliffe, near Bradford, Yorkshire, originated in 1784, principally by the encouragement of Edward Hanson, Esq., of London, with the Independent churches in Yorkshire. The Rev. William Vint, of Idle, became Tutor; under whose tuition about a hundred ministers

have been educated for their important work. The munificence of a lady, Mrs. Bacon, has enabled the committee to erect a convenient College, which is soon to be opened, for the accommodation of about twenty students.

8. Hackney Academy, near London, arose in 1803, out of the exertions of the Village Itinerancy, or Evangelical Association for spreading the Gospel in England; for which see Book IX. It is still under the care of its first excellent Tutor, the Rev. G. Collison, assisted by the Rev. S. Ransom.

9. The Blackburn Independent Academy, Lancashire, arose in 1816, out of the more private seminary of the Rev. W. Roby, of Manchester; when the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, D. D., and the Rev. W. Hope, were appointed Tutors. It is at present under the united care of the Rev. Gilbert Wardlaw, M. A., and the Rev. W. L. Alexander, M. A.

10. North Wales Independent Academy is at New Town, Montgomeryshire. The Rev. Messrs. Davies and Bowen are its Tutors; but our information is imperfect concerning this institution.

11. Congregational Academy, Newaddluyd, Cardiganshire. Our knowledge of this, also, is deficient; but the Rev. Thomas Philips is Tutor.

12. Glasgow Academical Institution, whose Tutors are the Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, D. D., and the Rev. Greville Ewing, M. A.

13. Gosport Academy, Hampshire, during forty years, was under the care of the late Rev. Dr. Bogue, D. D.: now its Tutor is the Rev. J. Carruthers.

14. Rowell, Northamptonshire, is a more private seminary, under the care of the Rev. Walter Scott.

Several other academies, of a more private character, our limits will not allow us to notice; nor the particulars of a College at Birmingham, for which considerable property has been left by the late Charles Glover, Esq.

II.—BAPTISTS.

Baptists the second denomination of Dissenters—Their number—Eminent men—Their academies—Bristol—Bradford—Abergavenny—Stepney—Missionary Societies.

NEXT in order, among the English Dissenters, the Baptist denomination is ranked. They are Congregational Independents, but holding baptism to be proper only by submersion, and in the case of adult persons. This respectable body includes about 1,100 churches in England and Wales, of which 110 belong to the General Baptists, who are Arminians; the others, being Calvinists, are called Particular Baptists.

This denomination of Christians has been highly distinguished for eminent men; among whom we must not omit to mention the late Robert Hall, D. D., of Bristol, the first preacher in the British empire of our day; Drs. Carey and Marshman, missionaries, and translators of the Scriptures into many languages of India; Drs. Ryland, Steadman, Cox, and Newman, tutors of their academies for the ministry; Dr. Olinthus Gregory, professor of Mathematics in the Royal Military College; the Rev. Andrew Fuller, secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society; the Rev. Mr. Foster, the essayist; and the Rev. Mr. Hughes, founder and secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Religion has greatly flourished in the Baptist churches, some of which contain more than five hundred members in communion.

Four academies, for the education of young men for the ministry, are supported by the Baptists:—

1. The Baptist Academy in Bristol was founded in 1710; and, under a succession of able tutors, many eminent men have been trained, who have been blessings to the church of Jesus Christ. In 1827 there were twenty-one students in this Academy.

2. Bradford Baptist Academy was formed in 1804. It arose out of the “Northern Education Society.” In 1828 the students were twenty-two in number.

3. Abergavenny Baptist Academy was founded in 1807, for

the education of Welsh Baptist ministers. This institution needs public support: it had, in 1828, only seven students.

4. Stepney Baptist Academy, near London, was founded in 1810; and in 1828 it had fourteen students.

The Baptists have manifested the most laudable zeal in seeking to evangelize the world; and God has graciously honoured them in the translation of the Holy Scriptures, above every other denomination of Christians. We refer our readers to Book IX. for an account of the Baptist Missionary, the Baptist Home Missionary, and the Baptist Irish Societies, particularly, for a view of their exertions in promoting the cause of Christ and truth in the world, besides their co-operation in the other societies, for home and foreign societies to evangelize mankind.

III.—GENERAL BAPTISTS.

Number of general Baptist churches—Their Academies—Wisbeach—Loughborough—Missionary Society.

ARIANISM, in the eighteenth century, infected some of the general Baptist churches; several of them sunk into Socinianism; and, it is believed, a few of them still belong to that class. A new connexion was formed in 1770, of those who are esteemed orthodox in the doctrine of the Trinity. They now comprise about one hundred and ten churches, and their increase, especially in some of the midland counties, during this century, have been considerable.

This body of believers is far from being wealthy; but they “have done what they could,” not only in promoting the cause of Christ at home, but in sending the gospel to the heathen. They have a seminary at Wisbeach, in Cambridgeshire, and another at Loughborough, in Leicestershire, for the education of their ministers. Missionaries from this denomination have been sent to Orissa, in the East Indies.

IV.—PRESBYTERIANS.

Presbyterians once the chief denomination of Dissenters—Arians and Socinians—Orthodox Presbyterians—Eminent men—Presbyterian academy, Carmarthen.

THE Presbyterians, at the Revolution, were the leading body of Dissenters, and chief of the “Three Denominations;” but at the present time it is by far the smallest. There are now in England and Wales two hundred and fifty-eight Presbyterian congregations; of which, however, there are not many more than fifty who are esteemed orthodox, as regards the person of Christ.

Arianism, which arose in the church of England soon after the Revolution, by the writings of Dr. Samuel Clarke and Mr. Whiston, as we have already stated, infected their churches; the government of which being taken from the people by the trustees who disposed of the endowments, a class of ministers was chosen by them, on account of their learning and moral mode of preaching, rather than of their evangelical piety. By this means new trustees were elected on account of their wealth and aversion to the peculiar doctrines of Christ, rather than of their zeal for the truths in which the martyrs and Nonconformist confessors gloried; and the pious part of the people gradually withdrew from a ministry in which they found no evangelical edification and consolation, while the ministers have, in most instances, sunk into Socinianism. See “Socinians.”

There are, notwithstanding, in London and other parts of the kingdom, among the orthodox Presbyterians, large congregations, with pastors of the most distinguished excellencies. It is sufficient to mention the names of Drs. Hunter, Trotter, Nicol, and Waugh, to recommend learning, piety, and pastoral qualifications.

Presbyterian ministers, of orthodox sentiments, are generally members of the church of Scotland, and educated in that country. At Carmarthen, in Wales, there is a Presbyterian academy; but the tutor, the Rev. Mr. Peters, is an Independent; and such, it is believed, are most of his students.

V.—QUAKERS.

Morality of the Quakers—Orthodoxy of the Friends—Supporters of the Bible, School, and Peace Societies—They have no separated body of ministers—Eminent men.

THE Quakers or Friends are a highly respectable body of professed Christians; and though it would, perhaps, be too much to suppose that the majority of them are truly religious persons, there is manifestly a large measure of serious piety among them. No denomination of Christians is distinguished for correctness in morals, more remarkably than the Society of Friends. Socinianism has been supposed to prevail in this body; but its principal writers deny this insinuation; and their “Yearly Epistle” is considered decidedly orthodox on the subject of our Saviour’s divinity. Proselyting is no peculiarity of the Friends; consequently they take no part in the work of Christian missions to the heathen; though many of their members regret this policy of their leaders. But their attachment to the British and Foreign Bible Society, the British and Foreign School Society, and the Universal Peace Society, is generous and ardent. The Quakers have no body of men separated to the work of the gospel ministry; consequently, they have furnished very few writers of eminence; but it would be unjust not to acknowledge our obligations to their devotional poet, Bernard Barton; and especially to the excellent orthodox and learned works in defence of Christianity, by John Joseph Gurney.

VI.—MORAVIANS.

Moravians few in England—Number of their congregations—Their Missions—Eminent men.

THE Moravians, or United Brethren, are but few in England. They have not, it is believed, more than twenty congregations in Great Britain, and they do not appear zealous to increase their numbers. The principal Moravian establishment is at Fulnec, near Leeds; they have another at Fairfield, near Manchester;

a smaller one at Ockbrook, near Derby ; and one at Ayr, in Scotland. In Bedford, Bristol, and London, they have considerable congregations, distinguished by evangelical doctrine and primitive piety. But the immortal honour of the Moravians is secured by their devoted perseverance in the noble work of Christian missions ; for a record of which, we refer to Book IX. The Rev. Benjamin Latrobe, and his son, the Rev. C. I. Latrobe, of the United Brethren, deserve our acknowledgments as eminent ministers of Christ.

VII.—WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

Successes of the Methodists—Number of their Pastors—Local preachers—Chapels and preaching stations—Report of their members by Conference—Their want of seminaries for an educated ministry—Eminent men—Political constitution, and operations of the Methodists.

THE Wesleyan Methodists have continued to labour with great success in almost every part of the kingdom, and their increase has been correspondingly great. Their regular preachers, or pastors, as reported by the Minutes of Conference of 1830, are eight hundred and forty-eight in England, Wales, and Scotland ; but these are assisted by a large body of “Local Preachers,” who are the more gifted of the members in communion, and who amount to the number of about two thousand five hundred : so that they supply about three thousand chapels, including their preaching stations, on the Lord’s-day.

The numerical strength of the Wesleyan Methodist body, as reported by conference in 1830, we shall here record :—

Great Britain, members in	249,278
Ireland	22,896
Foreign stations—Europe	214
Asia	1,000
South Seas	341
Africa	867
British North America	5,906
West Indies	32,858
	<hr/>
	313,360

Travelling preachers—Great Britain	848
Ireland	145
Foreign stations ..	193
<hr/>	
	1,186

The Methodists have no institution for the education of their ministers, who are generally chosen from the body of their local preachers, after certain recommendations and probation. This has been felt as a serious disadvantage by many among them ; and several sensible appeals have been made by intelligent individuals in favour of such an establishment, but hitherto in vain. Nevertheless, besides a few of liberal education, who have joined that society, there are individuals among the Wesleyan Methodists, whose learning, chiefly by personal application to study, like that of bishop Warburton, would do honour to any communion. Of their eminent men, we must not omit to mention the Rev. Mr. Drew, the Rev. Richard Watson, and especially the very learned Adam Clarke, LL.D.

The Wesleyan Methodists are a political body, peculiarly united, whose movements and operations are regulated and controlled by the annual conference, at which all the affairs of the society are reviewed, and the stations of the ministers fixed for the year. Our limits will not allow us to notice the schools for the sons of ministers ; nor several other of their beneficial plans, but we refer with pleasure to Book IX. for an account of their Missionary Society.

VIII.—CALVINISTIC METHODISTS.

Calvinistic Methodists in Wales—In England—Their congregations large—Generally use the Common Prayer—They unite with the Independents for missionary purposes.

THE Calvinistic Methodists comprehend a very large portion of the Dissenters in Wales, to the account of which we refer, though some of that body are now reckoned with the Independents. They also include about sixty congregations in England, founded by Whitfield and his colleagues, and by

some other ministers who have seceded from the establishment; and of others formed by pious persons, attached to the liturgical forms of prayer, but who have separated for the purpose of enjoying the right to choose their own ministers.

These congregations in England are generally large, and most of them use the whole or part of the Common Prayer in their public worship. Religion is generally prosperous among them, and they co-operate with the Independents, in their plans for the promotion of the kingdom of Christ throughout the world in the missionary cause, and with the union of evangelical Christians in supporting the Bible Society.

IX.—COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON'S CONNEXION.

Number of their congregations—Cheshunt college—Home Missionary Society.

CORPORATIVELY little vigour has distinguished the countess of Huntingdon's connexion during the present century, and the number of their congregations exhibits but an inconsiderable increase. They now amount to somewhat more than sixty; but the system of management in this connexion is not particularly favourable to increase. The preachers were originally required to itinerate, but the inconvenience of that plan being felt, most of them are settled as pastors of their respective congregations, and the same system is encouraged by the trustees, as most profitable for every people.

The college of this connexion at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, for the education of candidates for the ministry, is supported with a degree of zeal, and several eminent preachers have been trained in that seminary. Evangelical benevolence has distinguished many excellent members of this communion, who have co-operated in the great missionary institutions. A Home Missionary Society has been established by the friends of this connexion, and some good fruits have already appeared, as the result of their operations.

X.—NEW METHODISTS.

Exclusive policy of Mr. Wesley—Delegates appeal to Conference—Rejected—New Methodist Connexion—Primitive Methodists—Independent Methodists—Bryanite Methodists—Wesleyan Protestant Methodists.

DURING the life of Mr. Wesley, all the societies looked up to him as their founder and guardian. Every chapel, therefore, that was built for the use of his preachers, was vested in himself, or in persons whom he appointed; and he framed a Deed, so that at his death these chapels were transferred to a certain number of preachers, in whom he placed peculiar confidence. By this the people were excluded from all share in the management of even the temporal affairs of the connexion. On this occasion, about seventy delegates, from all parts of the kingdom, met the conference at Leeds, in 1797, and proposed that in future the annual conference should consist of “an equal number of preachers and representatives of the people,” to be chosen by them. This proposition being rejected by the conference,—

1. The Methodist New Connexion was formed, chiefly by the talents and zeal of Mr. Alexander Kilham, a distinguished preacher, and from whom they were sometimes called Kilhamites. At its first formation, it embraced only seven preachers, seven circuits, and 500 members, very widely scattered, and having but few chapels; but they so far succeeded, that in 1814, they had 23 circuits, 101 chapels, 207 societies, and 8,292 members; and 44 itinerant, and 229 local preachers. In 1829, they had 162 chapels, 59 circuits, and 492 local preachers, who minister to 11,777 members. Several other branches have successively separated from the parent stock of Methodism; and they continue to increase under particular denominations.

2. The Primitive Methodists, or as they are vulgarly called Ranters, report, that their connexion possesses 403 chapels, 228 travelling, and 2,491 local preachers, and 33,720 members.

3. “The Independent Methodists” have “upwards of 100 lay teachers, and 4000 members. They have no preachers

exclusively devoted to the work, it being a principal part of their glorying, that they do not countenance a hired ministry."

4. The Bryanite Methodists are found chiefly in the western counties, and they take their name from Bryan, one of their preachers. It is reported they have about 13,000 members; but we have no accurate return of the number of their chapels or preachers.

5. The Wesleyan Protestant Methodists are a body of separatists principally at Leeds, where they held their first conference in September, 1829, and reported 2,480 members; since which they have much increased, especially about London.

These various secessions from the original body, with their adherents, have so increased, that it is computed their number exceeds 200,000 persons; there being about 70,000 in society, and their congregations about 700. They are considered as holding the same doctrinal views as their original founder, Mr. Wesley, and as having adopted most of his practical methods in seeking the salvation of souls. Britain has been incalculably benefited by their active zeal; for their labours have been directed chiefly to the neglected peasantry and labouring mechanics of our country, among whom they have been the means of a remarkable reformation; and we are well persuaded, that, although learned infidelity and pharisaic pride may despise the labours of their more illiterate preachers, the Spirit of grace has been poured upon them; and that in their communions there are many gracious souls, members of the true church of God, and heirs of his eternal glory.

XI.—SOCINIANS.

Socinians reject the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel—Number of their congregations—Their congregations decline—Their unrighteous perversion of trust property—Works in refutation of Socinianism.

SOCINIANS, or, as they call themselves, "Unitarians," we cannot acknowledge as forming any part of the church of God; because they reject the Christian doctrine of atonement, and

most of the distinguishing peculiarities of the gospel. Most sincerely, therefore, do we rejoice, that their congregations are rapidly declining in England; though they have been strangely magnified lately by several of the indiscreet friends of the British and Foreign Society.

Truth requires us to state, that "this denomination has, in England, Scotland, and Wales, about 223 meeting-houses; of this number, about 171 have been built by persons most decidedly orthodox; and as many of this number as are endowed, (and many of them are plentifully endowed,) were so enriched by the orthodox also. The remaining 52 were built by the Socinians."*

Out of all these chapels, it is ascertained, that not more than about six are well attended; and those are occupied by ministers of fine oratorical powers, and situated favourably in genteel populous neighbourhoods. The rest are dwindling congregations, many of them not exceeding thirty persons; and some of the chapels are closed! It is only just here to record, that no people, at any time, have ever so far fallen from high moral integrity, in the misappropriation of Trust Property, contrary to the known intentions of the donors; for both the trustees and the ministers know, that the design of the pious dead was the propagation of doctrines the very contrary to those of Socinian belief. These possessions, therefore, are retained in violation of every principle of religion, morality, or honour.

Besides the endowments upon chapels, by which the Socinian ministers are supported, there are other trusts which have been perverted in like manner; "Chamberlaine's Fund," Hull; "Butterworth's Fund," Manchester; "Mrs. Clough's Fund," Liverpool; "Lady Hewley's Fund," Wakefield; and "Dr. William's Charity," London.

	<i>£ s. d.</i>
Chapel Endowments which are ascertained, per annum ...	30 17 0 0
Lady Hewley's Fund, per annum about	4000 0 0
Funds of Chamberlaine, Butterworth, and Clough's, Ditto	183 0 0
	<hr/>
	<i>£ 7,200 0 0†</i>

* Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, by Isaac Mann, M. A. p. 309.

† Manchester Socinian Controversy, &c. Westley, 1832.

Socinianism has been utterly overthrown in several very able modern works: among which we cannot omit Bp. Magee on "Atonement and Sacrifice;" "The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Compared as to their Moral Tendency," by Andrew Fuller, a Baptist minister; and especially "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy," by Dr. Wardlaw; and "The Atonement, Sacrifice, and Priesthood of Christ;" and "The Scripture Testimony to the Messiah," by Dr. J. P. Smith, Independent ministers.

CHAPTER XII.

WALES.

South Wales blessed with the Calvinistic Methodists—North Wales deplorably ignorant—Rev. T. Charles excluded from the Establishment—Joins the Calvinistic Methodists—His various and beneficial labours—Testimonies from the Prize Essay on the state of religion in Wales—The lamentable state of the Church Establishment—Successes of the Dissenters—Testimony of the Rev. D. Peter—Of the Rev. D. Davies.

SOUTH WALES had been extensively blessed in the eighteenth century, not only by the operation of the Independents, but by the zeal of the Calvinistic Methodists. These had laboured in connexion with Mr. Whitfield, and his friends in the church, Daniel Rowlands, Howell Harris, and Howell Davis. The fruits of their exertions have continued to the present times; and a succession of devoted men has been raised up among the people, not unworthy of their predecessors. Among whom Mr. Peter, of Carmarthen, is worthy of mention, under whose tuition many men of God have been trained up for the ministry of the gospel.

North Wales, during the same period, was in a most deplorable state, so far as regards religion. A church of England writer states, "True religion had forsaken the country. There was nothing like the semblance of it in the church; nor was there much of it among the few Dissenters that were thinly scattered here and there. No more knowledge of God, or of his Word, was to be found in most places, than in a heathen land. The Bible was almost unknown as a book; seldom to

be met with, especially in the houses of the poor. In many parishes, not even ten could be found capable of reading it; and in several parishes of Anglesea, not even two or three!"

Notwithstanding this grievous state of things, every parish had a church, and its "priest enjoying the living." While they were neglecting their awful duties, "darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people."

But Thomas Charles arose, "a burning and shining light." He was converted to Christ, by the ministry of Daniel Rowlands, educated at Oxford, and ordained in the church of England, in whose communion he laboured as curate of Queen's Camel, Somersetshire, from 1778 till 1783. He married and settled at Bala, and served a curacy at Llanymowddy for nearly a year: but his faithful and evangelical ministry provoked his clerical brethren, by whom he was driven from service in the established church. Such was the hostility shown to him, that he could not obtain a curacy in his own country, though he offered to serve gratis!

Excluded thus, like Whitfield and Wesley, from the pulpits of the church, he began to preach in his own house, and at length in the chapels of the Calvinistic Methodists, among whom he became, perhaps, the most devoted and successful labourer during thirty years.

On his becoming a Methodist, he commenced the establishment of circulating schools among the mountaineers and villagers, and of Sunday-schools connected with all the chapels of that religious body. Both children and adults were instructed in those schools, which increased prodigiously under his fostering care; and he lived to witness the most delightful change in the morals of the poor, and in the increase of vital religion in Wales. He had also the happiness of seeing them provided with the Holy Scriptures in their vernacular tongue, through the operations of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which originated in his application for Bibles to friends in London.

We cannot detail the various labours of Mr. Charles, which were truly extraordinary, both of a literary and ministerial kind. For many years he visited the Welsh societies in Liverpool, Manchester, Gloucester, and London; and in the metropolis, the late Countess of Huntingdon's chapels, where his

ministry was eminently useful. He died in 1814, leaving a most exalted character both as a Christian and a philanthropist.

Of the state of religion in the "Established Church" in Wales, we shall now avail ourselves of the testimony of a barrister of that communion, in a "Prize Essay" on "The Causes which have produced Dissent in Wales from the Established Church," to which "the Royal Medal was awarded by the London Cambrian Institution, May, 1831." The writer says, "The Church of England is ill suited to the Welsh people—the clergy are all educated in England—controlled by English bishops—and their style of preaching is, therefore, formed on an English fashion. After the most careful consideration of the subject, I feel that I owe it to the truth to state my persuasion, that the crying abuse of the church in Wales is, that the bishoprics are systematically conferred on Englishmen. For the last century, not an individual has ruled a Welsh diocese, who possessed the faintest knowledge of the language of the people. Conventicles are erected in every direction. I have lately, in a journey of thirty miles, passed by ten churches, and double that number of chapels, most of them bearing Scripture names, such as Beulah, Rehoboth, Horeb, Hermon, Salem, Ebenezer, &c. Not only on the borders, but also in the centre, and at the western extremity of Wales, have Englishmen been collated to benefices, whose services, if served at all, must be entirely in Welsh. The strangers, as a makeshift, underwent a lecture or two in the Welsh language, in order to be able to read in it. But the voice of the stranger, instead of collecting a flock, scattered the sheep. Before the time of Charles of Bala, the rulers of the church had done nothing towards the education of the people. The more experienced part of the Welsh clergy entirely approved of Charles's plan; and a great portion of them have shown as enthusiastic a zeal for education as the fathers of their church: but here again the higher orders of the church are a clog upon them. Since the time of Charles, the press has been a powerful engine in the hands of the Dissenters. Charles's Magazine, in the Welsh language, gave rise to no less than eight others, which still circulate among the peasantry of Wales. They belong to

different sects, and defend sectarian opinions : some of them have been the means of spreading a good deal of valuable knowledge among the people.”

“ On this state of things I may at least be permitted to say, that it is a very melancholy one. That it does not indicate very sound principles in the church, will, perhaps, hardly be denied by any one; but to the man of candour and religious feeling, I would confidently appeal, as a proof that there is something fundamentally wrong in the administration of the church in Wales. In the last century the people were unenlightened, and the episcopal authority did nothing to improve their religious condition ; and now that they are educated, it has turned even the gospel light into a firebrand. In Wales the state of the church may be termed a perfect incubus on the mental advancement of the people.”

“ Such is the nature of Welsh dissent ; and it will now, perhaps, be asked how fast it has progressed. I tremble, I shudder to think. If it be asked, how far dissent has gone in Wales, it may be answered, that it has gone as far as the means of her population will enable them to carry it. It may be replied, that there are as many dissenting chapels in the remote parts of Wales as there are in many flourishing English towns. In Chester there are eight chapels ; in the parish of Llanfair, in Montgomeryshire, thirteen !”

After showing how iniquitously the revenues of the churches are withdrawn from Wales, by careless absentees and cathedral dignitaries, and various other existing abuses and evils, under which the oppressed curates suffer, the writer says, “ Such is the picture of the church in Wales in the nineteenth century : I make no comment ; I merely state facts as they are.” Then, speaking of Montgomeryshire, the writer says, “ I now come to apply them to the purpose of my essay ; I shall conclude this chapter by adverting to the rate at which dissent has progressed in the district in question. Most of my readers will be startled to find, that the dissenting chapels in Montgomeryshire are in number more than treble the churches !

“ Churches, fifty-two ; dissenting chapels, at least one hundred and seventy.

“ Every friend of the church of England will perhaps expe-

rience a more painful feeling than that of surprise, when he learns that dissent has gained at least two-thirds of its present strength within the brief space of sixteen years! The Rev. D. Peter, a well-informed dissenting minister, in 1814, stated, that the number of dissenting societies in this county amounted, at that time, to seventy-four; of course his feelings would have inclined him rather to overrate than depreciate the strength of sectarianism. Since then, as before mentioned, their chapels have increased to one hundred and seventy; and a great many societies assemble for worship in private houses. There are about one hundred ministers constantly employed in preaching about the country; (that is, about double the number of the resident clergy;) they have, also, among them numerous lay-preachers, who are very zealous in proselyting; in each of their chapels, probably treble the number of sermons are preached that are preached in the church! Such is the spirit of resistance that has sprung up against the establishment."

In a letter from the Rev. D. Peter, dated Feb. 7, 1829, addressed to a London minister, he says, "Fourteen years ago, when I was publishing my 'History of Religion in Wales,' I found, from authentic documents, that there were in the principality two hundred and fifty-five Independent churches; one hundred and twenty-six Baptist churches; three hundred and forty-three Calvinistic Methodist societies, and two hundred and five Wesleyan Methodist societies. The number of churches and societies at present is much greater. I am not in possession of a correct account of the numbers added to the Baptist and Calvinistic Methodist churches: but the general opinion is, that upwards of 3,000 souls have been added to the churches of Christ, including all denominations in South Wales, within the last year. There is at present, throughout South Wales, a general desire for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit: and there are Union Monthly Prayer-Meetings in various parts, for the out-pouring of the Spirit, which are numerously attended. Indeed, I have no doubt that many ministers and churches, besides those which I have mentioned, do already experience, in some degree, the out-pouring of the Spirit. Great additions have been made to many dissenting churches not mentioned in this letter, in the course of last year; and

from the aspect of things throughout the country, we have every reason to hope that God will soon cause revivals to be general in Wales." The Rev. David Davies, in a letter dated Jan. 10, 1829, referring to Carmarthenshire, says, "In the course of the year, the addition of members to these and other congregations or churches in the same county, including a few on the borders of Breconshire, have been, to the Calvinistic Methodists, 1,800; to the Independents, 1,450; and to the Baptists, 445." He further adds, "Upwards of thirty-five churches of the Independent denomination, in the eastern part of the county of Carmarthen, and the adjoining parts of Glamorgan and Breconshire. A moderate calculation has been made of the new members added to the above churches since February last, which amounts to upwards of three hundred hopeful converts." These reports cannot but be most gratifying to the mind of every Christian, and engage his ardent prayers for the universal effusion of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCOTLAND.

Pure religion flourishes in Scotland—Patronage an evil in the Scotch establishment—Number of ministers—Christian liberality of the Scotch clergy—Secession church—Eminent men—Independents—Scottish episcopal church—Baptists—State of the large towns.

PURE scriptural religion continues to advance in Scotland, both in the national church and among the various denominations of Dissenters. In no part of Great Britain does the fear of God appear to prevail so much as in Scotland; and except in Glasgow, Paisley, and a few other manufacturing places, the Lord's-day, and the ordinances of public worship, are regarded with exemplary attention, unknown in England. Nor have the Scotch been behind their southern brethren in zeal and liberality in supporting the Bible and Missionary Societies for the evangelization of the dark parts of their own country, and the extension of the kingdom of Christ among the heathen nations.

Patronage, however, exists in the Scotch establishment; through which the people are prevented, to a considerable extent, from choosing their own ministers; and consequently, although the patrons in general regard the public wishes, pastors who are incompetent as to their talents, unsound as to doctrine, and destitute of personal piety, are to be found in the church of Scotland. Still the national church exhibits none of those glaring evils so justly complained of by bishop Hobart as existing in the church of England—pluralities and church livings sold as mere property; and a society has been formed in Scotland to correct and destroy the pernicious operations of patronage.

The Presbyterian ministers of the northern establishment are all equal, pastoral, not prelatical bishops, performing the duties of their respective offices in their own persons. Presbyterianism, in the form of its government and its magnitude in Scotland, may be partly ascertained from the consideration of the numbers of its presbyteries and ministers. A presbytery consists of a number of pastors in a district; of which there are seventy-eight in Scotland; and the number of ministers is nine hundred and thirty-seven; besides which, there are about fifty chapels of ease in the more populous towns and vicinities: but the ministers of these have no vote in the presbyteries. It is worthy of remark here, that the exclusive spirit of bigotry does not reign in this as in the church of England; for the dissenting ministers of the south are allowed to officiate in their pulpits; and the clergy of the church of Scotland are welcomed with Christian affection to the pulpits of the English Dissenters.

The secession churches in Scotland have continued to increase from the time of the Erskines to the present day; and their present condition is flourishing. Though divided into four branches, they meet in a United Synod, and consisted, in 1820, of eighteen presbyteries, including two hundred and sixty-five ministers, having under their inspection three hundred and seven congregations. In their education, these ministers are in no respect inferior to those of the national church; and it is necessary to mention no more of them than John Brown, divinity professor, and commentator on the Bible, and Dr.

M'Crie, the biographer of Knox, the reformer, to recommend piety, talents, and varied erudition.

Lately, the Independents have flourished in Scotland; and the Congregational Union of Scotland comprise about ninety Independent congregations. Their ministers are of a highly respectable class; and Greville Ewing, and Dr. Wardlaw, would be regarded as ornaments to any communion, as their imperishable writings have brought undying honour to themselves, and blessings immortal to the church of God. This body maintains a most active and extensive system of itinerancy through the uncultivated parts of Scotland, and God has rendered their labours an increasing blessing.

Another branch of Dissenters in the North is the Scottish episcopal church: it is not large, nor has it greatly increased since the restoration of the church of Scotland. It contains six diocesses, with so many bishops; though their dignity is little more than nominal: they assume not the title of Lord, and they are pastors of congregations, assembling in their several chapels. In these diocesses are sixty chapels; thirty-two of which are situated in Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, and Aberdeen.

There are also some Baptist churches, some Methodist societies, and some congregations of Quakers; but they are not so numerous as those of other denominations.

To some it may be gratifying to learn the relative proportion between the Dissenters, and those of the national church in several populous towns in Scotland. "In Glasgow, the church established by law has accommodation for 29,750 persons, while the unestablished churches accommodate 47,379 persons. In Paisley, the church accommodation is little more than 6000, and upwards of 3000 sittings were unoccupied in 1829, while the Dissenters have, in Paisley and the immediate neighbourhood, accommodation for 11,000 persons."

CHAPTER XIV.

IRELAND.

Population of Ireland—Established church—Patronage a source of evil—Degradation of Ireland—Tithes—Murders in enforcing their payment—Enormity of the system—Dr. Doyle's letter to Lord Farnham—Deplorable state of religion—Zeal of Dissenters—Societies—Some pious clergymen—Ulster—General Synod of Ulster—Reformation among the Presbyterians—State of religion among them—Means for reviving religion—Independents—Baptists—Methodists—Roman Catholics.

IRELAND possesses a population of about eight millions, six millions of whom are Catholics, upwards of a million are Presbyterians and other denominations called Dissenters, and the rest profess to be of the church, the chartered “United church of England and Ireland.”

Ireland presents a most strange anomaly in the “established church.” The Rev. Mr. Adam, a clergyman, in his work, “The Religious World Displayed,” says, “In Ireland there are about 2,246 parishes, of which 293 are in the gift of the crown, 367 in that of laymen, 21 in that of Trinity College, 1,470 in that of the bishops, &c. &c. The archbishop of Dublin presents to 144 livings; the bishop of Ferns to 171; the bishop of Cloyne to 106, and the bishop of Kildare to 131.”

“By the fifth article of the union in 1800, the united church is the only church recognised in Ireland; yet her members there are comparatively few, not being supposed to exceed 400,000, whereas her revenues are immense.”*

Patronage in the church of Ireland is a crying evil of enormous magnitude; as “many of the clergy, through interest, have obtained large preferment;” and it was lately stated, (in 1831,) in the House of Commons, beyond contradiction, by Mr. O'Connell, that a son of a bishop in Ireland holds no less than eleven different livings!! There are in the church of Ireland four archbishops, eighteen bishops, three hundred dignitaries, and twelve hundred incumbents. As must necessarily be the

* Religious World Displayed, by the Rev. Robert Adam, M. A., p. 204.—Abridgment.

case, many of the clergy are non-residents and absentees, for which they have "dispensations." Some have no Protestants in their parishes, consequently the churches are seldom opened for public worship; and some indeed have no churches!

Mr. Douglas, in his most interesting volume, says, "Ireland has been but half civilized, and it is certainly not half Christianized. Popery there exists in its worst form of slavish and blindfold bigotry; and the errors of the darkest ages remain undisputed by the increasing light which is spreading over the rest of Europe. A difference of religion has aggravated a difference of political interest; that which, with respect to numbers, is a small sect, becomes, by the assistance of the bayonet, the established church; and poverty the most squalid is ground to the dust, to enrich what it believes to be a heresy as fatal to the souls as it actually finds it to be to the bodies of men."*

The exaction of tithes from the wretched Catholic population, by means of mercenary agents, in support of a small number of ministers, whom they are taught to regard as heretics, and who actually, in many instances, pay no regard to the spiritual welfare of the people, provoking their hatred, has been the cause of much contention, strife, and even bloodshed, in Ireland. B. Osborne, Esq., at the county meeting at Wexford, held July 30, 1831, speaking of the system of tithes, said, "I have taken the laborious trouble to search accurately the files of some Irish Journals, and I have found that no less than six and twenty thousand persons have been butchered, in twenties and tens, during the last thirty years in Ireland, in the enforcement of this system."

The enormity of the tithe system, especially in Ireland, is monstrous in itself, and injurious to the interests of pure Christianity; and through this, principally, the Catholic priests succeed in cherishing among their people their rooted prejudices against the scriptural doctrines of Protestantism. In his letter to Lord Farnham, Dr. Doyle eloquently appeals against this unrighteous and unchristian exaction, in the following melting terms: "Can heaven, my lord, witness, or the earth

* *Advancement of Society in Knowledge and Religion*, by James Douglas, Esq., 8vo. edition, p. 245, 246.

endure, any thing more opposed to piety and justice than a man professing to be the minister of Him who, being rich, became poor for our sake, the teacher of his gospel, the follower of his law, taking the blanket from the bed of sickness, the ragged apparel from the limbs of the pauper, and sell it by auction for the payment of tithe? Who with patience can hear and behold the hundreds of starving peasants assembled before the seat of justice, (Oh, justice, how thy name is profaned!) to await the decrees of some heartless lawyer, consigning their persons (for property they have what scarcely deserves the name) to ruin, or imprisonment for tithes? In this group of harassed, hungry, and afflicted paupers, you, my lord, could recognise the widowed mother and the orphan child—the naked youth, whom individual charity had just clothed, and the common mendicant, whose cabin and rood of earth could not supply them with food and shelter for one half the year. But to view the assemblage of human misery, which I so often have beheld, and reflect that perhaps a moiety of them were the very objects for whose relief or comfort tithes were consigned by our fathers to clerical trust—that these paupers were the legal claimants on the funds now extorted from them under the very colour of law;—to consider all this, and that the religion of him who claimed this tithe was a religion unknown to them—that the priest who fleeced them never prayed with them, never consoled them, never ministered for them to Almighty God;—to reflect on all this, and yet be silent or unmoved, should not be expected, unless of some atheist, whose God was his belly; or of some fanatic, whose heart was hardened, and whose sense was reprobate. These are the exhibitions, my lord, which I have seen and touched, and which led me, as they have led the best men Ireland ever saw, not to conspire against tithes, but to denounce them as unjust in principle, destructive of true religion, and subversive of the peace and happiness of our native land."

As regards religion, Ireland is in a state most truly deplorable, yet not absolutely hopeless; for, though ignorance and superstition extensively prevail, there are yet many pious and zealous ministers of different denominations of Christians in Ireland, whose labours have been a blessing to the country;

and many of the servants of God in England feel a lively interest in the welfare of the sister island. Correspondent with their pious wishes have been their benevolent exertions in the support of various schools and missionary institutions ; among which are the London Hibernian Society, the Dublin Kildare Street Society, the Irish Evangelical Society, the Baptist Irish Society, the Ladies' Hibernian Female School Society, (of which see Book IX.,) and the labours of the Methodists.

There is also, in the chartered "church of Ireland," a comparatively small body of holy and devoted ministers, who are zealously labouring to promulgate the pure gospel of Christ, as well as to destroy the delusions of popery ; but their successes are grievously impeded by the operation of the compulsory system of supporting the establishment.

Dissenters are numerous in Ireland, especially in the northern province of Ulster. We have already mentioned their existence and their increase during the last century.

The general synod of Ulster, in 1830, included two hundred and sixteen congregations ; the Presbyterian synod of Ireland, about one hundred and twenty ; the reformed or common synod, about twenty-five ; and the original burgher and another, about twelve ; in all, about four hundred congregations !

About twenty years ago, a movement was made in these bodies in endeavouring to promote a revival of religion, and after several efforts, the Synod of Ulster Home Missionary Society, and the Presbyterian Society of Ireland, were formed ; but without any great efficiency, as a grievous apathy had pervaded the churches generally. The Arian doctrine was entertained by many of the lifeless ministers, to the number, it was deposed, of thirty-seven. Several zealous ministers about four years ago sounded the alarm, addressing serious appeals to their brethren, and in 1829, seventeen seceded, entertaining Arianism.

"The Orthodox Presbyterian" of June, 1830, says, "Upon Tuesday, 25th May, seventeen ministers who have separated from the general synod of Ulster, assembled with sixteen elders, in the meeting-house of the first Arian congregation, Belfast. They have denominated themselves 'the Remon-

strant Synod of Ulster,' though not so numerous as some of our presbyteries, and though embracing within the sphere of their ministry a population, we opine, which at the most liberal estimate would not outnumber two of our large orthodox congregations. Still the loss of seventeen ministers and congregations appears to effect a formidable breach in the walls of our Presbyterian Zion. But, upon examination, we find the loss is more in name than in reality. The ministers indeed are gone, but, generally speaking, a large portion of the congregations remain with the synod of Ulster."

After noticing each of them in particular, the same work states, "Thus it will be seen, that while seventeen ministers have withdrawn from the Synod of Ulster, the breach is filled up by nine ministers and nine congregations; leaving barely eight ministers and eight congregations, that have totally withdrawn from the orthodox communion. According to the best conjecture we can form, we do believe that these eight congregations do not contain more families than may be frequently found in one orthodox congregation of the first class, in the counties of Down and Antrim."

Measures are taken to stir up the people to seek a revival of religion among them, and its extension around them, as appears by the Minutes of a General Synod at Armagh, in 1830: "Overruled and unanimously agreed to, that it appears highly expedient to unite the Synod's Home Mission and the Presbyterian Society for Ireland, in connexion with the General Synod of Ulster; that its object be the revival and extension of vital religion, especially among Presbyterians in Ireland, by disseminating the pure principles of the gospel, through the agency of faithful and active missionaries, preaching and instructing from house to house, in places destitute of a gospel ministry—by sending out scripture readers and catechists of piety and intelligence—by circulating publications, exposing error, and maintaining and enforcing evangelical truth; by assisting infant and weak congregations in support of the gospel—by bringing forward young men of talent and devotedness to the ministry—and by every other means suited to counteract and remove the ignorance, error, and deadness, which unhappily prevail amongst our population."

About sixty congregations of Independents are flourishing in different parts of Ireland; and by means of the Irish Evangelical Society, whose ministerial agents amount to nearly sixty, their numbers are increasing.

The Baptists have churches in several parts of the country, and an active society for the promotion of the gospel in Ireland, so that the cause of religion is being advanced by their means.

The Methodists have continued to increase in Ireland, and though they have not multiplied as they have in England, the number in society with them, in 1830, was reported to be 22,896, instructed by 145 regular travelling preachers.

The Roman Catholic priests amount to about 4,500 in number, supported by the voluntary contributions of their people. But these being compelled to support the teachers of the small sect of the church of Ireland by tithes, cherish their antipathy to the Protestants; and by this means the priests succeed in confirming their hostility even to the Bible. Nevertheless, scriptural education is increasing by the vigorous agencies of several societies formed in England; and the purity of Divine truth will ultimately prevail against every unrighteous exaction, and every form of superstition.

CHAPTER XV.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Progress of Christianity in America—Testimony of Dr. Symmonds—Presbyterians—Congregational Independents—Baptists—Methodist episcopal church—Protestant episcopal church—Quakers—Catholics—Minor sects—Their harmony—Seminaries of learning—Testimony of Dr. Moore—American Bible Society—Board of Foreign Missions—Home Missionary Society—Education Society—Sunday-school Union—Seaman's Friend Society—Observance of the Sabbath—Colonization Society Temperance Society—Extract from a letter of a friend at New York.

CHRISTIANITY, in the United States, has long commanded the deep and interested attention of every intelligent pious person. Uncontrolled by the partial interest of worldly politicians, and untrammeled by the lofty assumptions of an anti-

christian prelacy, left to its own divine resources, religion flourishes and prevails there more than in any other country upon earth. We adduce the candid testimony of Dr. Symmonds, of Jesus College, Oxford, the eloquent biographer of Milton. That powerful advocate for the purity of Christian institutions, observing, "The pastor ought to be supported by the contributions of his own flock, as the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church." Dr. Symmonds, while yet feeling the influence of his old prepossessions, remarks, "We should not hesitate to condemn this plan, if its practicability, and its inoffensive consequence, were not incontrovertably established by the testimony of America. From Hudson's Bay, with the small interruption of Canada, to the Mississippi, this immense continent beholds the religion of Jesus unconnected with the patronage of government, subsisting in independent, yet friendly communities, breathing that universal charity which constitutes its vital spirit, and offering, with its distinct yet blending tones, one grand combination of harmony to the ear of its heavenly Father."

Our plan seems to require that we should give a brief sketch of the several religious denominations in the United States; and for this we have some valuable materials in the "Congregational Magazine" for 1829, 1830, and 1831, from which chiefly we shall make our extracts.

The *Presbyterians* are usually placed first in the general returns. They have an Ecclesiastical Constitution and Confession of Faith. Their supreme ecclesiastical court is styled "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church;" the subordinate bodies are, "synods, presbyteries, and church sessions." There were in April, 1821, reported "20 synods;" 104 presbyteries; 1,584 ordained bishops; 216 licentiate preachers; 215 candidates in a course of preparation for the ministry; 2,253 churches; and 182,017 communicants. From April 1, 1830, to April 1, 1831, we have returns of 20,354 persons received into full communion of the Presbyterian church, of whom 15,357 were added on examination and profession of their faith." The great body of the Presbyterians inhabit the middle, southern, and western states.

The presbytery of Philadelphia, the first in the United

States, was organized in 1704; and in twelve years there were twenty-seven congregations: their increase up to the present period has been produced, under the blessing of Heaven, by means of the missionary labours of holy, zealous men, supported by the voluntary contributions of those who prized the gospel. During the year ending May, 1828, as the secretary, Dr. Ely, states, "The number of missionaries actually employed within the bounds of our presbyteries, though not reported to our Board, was not less than three hundred." He farther states, "There are probably fifteen baptized members who are pew-holders, supporters of, and attendants on, public worship, in our Presbyterian churches, for every communicant in our connexion; and if so, then our body in the United States contains 2,194,620 persons."

The *Congregational* form of church government prevails almost universally in New England, though a considerable number of these churches are scattered throughout the middle and southern states. It partakes of the peculiarities of both the Independent and Presbyterian systems. The congregations individually are formed on the Independent model, having no officers but pastors and deacons, and their general ecclesiastical affairs are managed by the whole church. Local associations, for counties or half counties, have been constituted for the promotion of the interests of religion; and the *General State Association*, which meets annually, is their Supreme Church Court, and is composed of delegates from the Local Associations. It must here be remarked, that these Associations have no authority to interfere with the management of any particular church, only to advise; but their counsel is generally respected. Such is the measure of fraternal, Christian good-will existing between this body and the Presbyterian denomination, that the General Association of the State of Massachusetts sends delegates to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, which meets annually in Philadelphia, and which in its turn sends delegates to the General Association.

The Congregational Body had, in 1828, 62 Associations, 720 ministers, 960 churches, of which 240 were destitute of settled pastors. Besides these there were believed to be more

than 100 churches of this order, holding the Unitarian doctrines of Arius and Socinus.

The *Baptist* denomination, which consists of Independent churches, is the largest of any in America. They have 190 associations, 3,723 churches, 2,577 ministers, and about 275,000 members.

The *Methodist Episcopal Church* includes the followers of Mr. Wesley in the United States, and who are found in the greatest numbers in the southern and Western States. They have three bishops, whose peculiar authority is not distinctly defined. Their business is conducted by the conference, which includes 83 districts, 890 circuits, 1,465 preachers, besides a large number of local preachers, and 381,997 members.

"The Baptist and Methodist churches in the United States, contain not far from 2,500,000 people in each; but they are comparatively poor, and include a larger proportion of slaves than other denominations. The proportion of non-communicating members in these two last-named societies is far less than in the Presbyterian church."

The *Protestant Episcopal Church* was once part of the church of England: but since the independence of the United States, its constitution has been greatly modified, and it has considerably increased. They have no archbishops, nor lord bishops, archdeacons, deans, prebends, canons, nor vicars. They have eleven diocesses, to each of which there is a bishop, who is elected by the convention of the diocese. They have no episcopal palaces, but dwell in their own hired houses; nor episcopal revenues, being pastors of congregations, as are the other clergy, and, like them, supported by the contributions of those who enjoy their instructions. When they travel through their diocese, the churches they visit pay their expenses. The bishops have no patronage, nor can they, by individual authority, appoint or remove any minister. No person has the gift of "parish" or "living;" it depends on the choice of the people. Some churches leave the appointment of the minister to the vestrymen, who are annually selected by the pew-holders; others select him by the ballot of the whole congregations. It is entirely left to the clergymen who shall be admitted to the ordinances: but their discipline varies in the different States.

This church is governed by a General Convention, which sits once in three years, divided into an upper and lower house; the former is composed of the bishops of the different states, and the latter of a portion of the clergy and laity from the several dioceses. All motions may originate in either house; although the concurrence of the majority of both must be obtained before they pass into a law. This church has 11 bishops, 486 clergymen, 598 churches, and 24,075 communicants.

The *Friends*, or Quakers, are most numerous in the States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. We cannot accurately learn the number of their congregations, but they are probably about 1000, as the whole Quaker population in the United States is computed at 750,000.

Roman Catholics are numerous in the States of Maryland, Louisiana, and Florida. The former is regarded the headquarters of popery in the Union. They have one archbishop, four bishops, and about 600,000 members.

There exists in America, besides, several minor denominations, but we are unable to enter into their peculiar notions: most of them, however, appear to hold the Scriptures as the only authority in religion, and to receive the saving doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We can only present their names and their numerical strength.

German Reformed, 90 ministers, 400 churches, 30,000 communicants.

Dutch Reformed, 150 churches, ministers about the same, 14,000 communicants.

Evangelical Lutherans, 200 ministers, 800 congregations.

Cumberland Presbyterians, 60 ministers, 60 congregations.

Christians, objecting to any other denomination, 250 ministers, 250 churches, about 20,000 communicants.

Free-will Baptists, 242 ministers, 335 churches, 12,000 communicants.

Seventh-day Baptists, 29 ministers, 18 churches, 2,862 communicants.

Six-principle Baptists, 20 ministers, 15 churches, 1,500 communicants.

Free Communion Baptists, 23 ministers, 32 churches, 1,284 communicants.

Tunkers, (German word for "dippers,") 30 ministers, 33 churches, 3,000 communicants.

Mennonites, 200 ministers, 225 churches, 20,000 communicants.

Universalists, 140 ministers, 250 societies.

Swedenborgians, 50 ministers, 12 societies, whole body supposed nearly 100,000.

Shakers, or *Shaking Quakers*, 40 preachers, 16 societies, whole body about 6,000.

Mr. Cooper, a popular American writer, referring to this diversity remarks, " You may be inclined to ask, if such a competition does not lead to strife and to ill-blood. Just the contrary. Each party knows that he is to gain or to lose influence, precisely as he manifests the practice of the doctrines he teaches ; and that, I apprehend, so far as Christianity is concerned, is charity and forbearance. At all events, great apparent good-will and cordiality generally exist among the clergy of the different sects. The people of this country manifest great zeal and interest in behalf of religion, I honestly think, more than any other nation I know ; and I believe it is simply because they are obliged to depend solely on themselves for its comfort and security."

Having reported about eleven thousand ministers of religion, as supported by the voluntary contributions of the people who enjoy their instructions, our readers will naturally inquire after the means of their education for the ministry. It has been recorded that soon after the first colonists settled in New England, Harvard college was founded ; but in 1828, there were "thirty-six colleges in the United States, besides several Theological Seminaries." Twenty-six of these institutions have been founded since the establishment of their independence in 1782. From this fact we may learn the solicitude of the people for an educated clergy.

Dr. Morse observes, " Few men in America have originally sufficient property to justify them in devoting their lives to the pursuit of literature. Our colleges have no well-endowed

fellowships to supply their deficiency. A government merely popular can never extend to learning any thing like English patronage; and Mecenases are indeed but rarely to be found in a country where wealth and office are the general object of pursuit. The consequence is, that men of learning of the English stamp are seldom to be found in the United States. The regular clergy, however, throughout the States, are not, as a body, behind the English clergy in theological or general learning. In the best colleges, the classical and sacred languages, and other branches of a liberal education, are taught by recitations and lectures, to an extent not surpassed in the general course of instruction at Oxford and Cambridge."

"Two-thirds of all the colleges, theological seminaries, and other academic institutions in this country, are under the instruction and controul of Presbyterians. The Congregational churches of New England, and the Presbyterian church together, have the charge of more than three-fourths of all these fountains of literary influence."

Still, to possess a correct and comprehensive view of the condition of the church of God in America, it will be indispensably necessary to notice those institutions which have been formed in that country for the advancement of religion, both at home and abroad. We can, however, mention only the principal of them.

I. The American Bible Society was formed in 1816. Local Bible Societies had previously existed, but it was not till a convention of delegates met in the Consistory Room of the Reformed Dutch Church, New York, in May, 1816, that this great National Institution was formed. The first president, Honourable Elias Boudinot, contributed the noble donation of 10,000 dollars in aid of its funds, to secure the perpetual distribution of a thousand Bibles annually. During the first year of the Society, there were issued from its depository, Bibles and Testaments, 6,410 copies; during the twelfth year, 134,706; and during the year ending May, 1829, the increased number of 200,122 copies. The whole amount of issues in thirteen years is 846,937. At the annual meeting in May, it was unanimously resolved "to supply every destitute family, willing to receive a Bible within the United States, with a copy of the

Scriptures within two years." The population of the Republic is about thirteen millions, or two million five hundred thousand families. It was computed that near a million of families were destitute of the Bible. These were scattered over a wide extent of country, from the Maine to Florida, twelve or fifteen hundred miles, and from the Rocky Mountains, fifteen hundred or two thousand miles. To accomplish this work, many hands and much money would be required; but the Directors of the society anticipated its completion within the time appointed.

New York is honoured and adorned by the American Bible Society House. It is a commodious building; and as the printing of the Holy Scriptures is not a matter of patent or privilege in that country, they have presses, &c., at work on the premises. At the time of passing that noble resolution, they had in their Depository 200,000 Bibles and Testaments. Eight steam power presses were at work in their offices, and eight more were to be ready in a few weeks. When these sixteen presses were in full operation, they expected to be able to print and bind up about 800,000 copies of the Bible per annum, which would more than meet the wants of their own population. To accomplish this undertaking, half a million of dollars was necessary, a tenth part of which New York was expected to furnish. One individual subscribed 5,000 dollars, equal to £1,140 sterling! and many others contributed sums to a large amount.

2. The American Board of Foreign Missions is the principal institution of the kind in America. Its constitution is truly catholic, corresponding with the candid principle of the London Missionary Society. It was incorporated in the year 1812.

The Board consists of 68 commissioners, residing in different parts of the Union, of whom 29 are laymen. The receipts for 1828 were 102,009 dollars. In support of this Board there exist, in sixteen states, 69 auxiliaries, including 830 male, and 641 female associations. The missions under the direction of this society, in 1828, were six stations in India, two in Western Asia, six in the Sandwich Islands, and thirty-two among the North American Indians. The number of missionaries, two hundred and twenty-three, including one hundred and

twenty-four females, to whom must be added about six hundred native assistants. In the schools of the several missions there were 32,919, of whom 26,000 were in the Sandwich Islands !

3. The American Home Missionary Society was formed in 1826, and each succeeding year has surpassed its predecessor in receipts, expenditure, and apparent usefulness. Its object is to diffuse Christian instruction, by assisting stated pastors, ministers and itinerants, to uphold and increase the congregations and missionary stations committed to them. In the first year, ending 1827, aid was afforded to 196 congregations and districts, in support of 169 missionaries ; in 1828, there were 304 missionaries. Connected with their labours were 289 Sabbath-schools, containing 15,000 pupils ; among whom 134 Bible classes had been formed, including 3,000 members. The receipts of 1829 were 26,997 dollars.

4. The American Tract Society was formed in 1825. Like the other societies, it has progressively increased. In 1826 it received 10,000 dollars, and issued a million of Tracts ; in 1827 it received 30,000 dollars, and issued three millions of Tracts ; in 1828 it received 45,000 dollars, and issued five millions of Tracts ; and in 1829 it received 60,000 dollars, and issued six millions of Tracts.

This society is constituted on the catholic principles of our Religious Tract Society, and its annual meeting on the 13th of May, 1829, was attended by Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, Episcopalian, and Moravian ministers, who took part in the delightful proceedings of the day. Five hundred gratuitous distributors of Tracts are employed in the city of New York, on the plan of the Christian Instruction Societies in London.

5. The American Education Society is directed to support the education of pious young men for the work of the ministry. It was founded in 1815. They aim at a thorough education, classical and theological, for seven years ; four years to be spent at some college, and three years at some theological seminary. The average expense is small, only about 75 dollars per annum, and many American churches engage to support, for seven years, from five to thirty students. This is an example most worthy of being followed by the churches in Great Britain !

6. The American Sunday-school Union was formed at

Philadelphia, in 1824. Although it had existed only five years, in 1829 it employed fourteen Sunday-school missionaries, of five different denominations. It had three periodical publications,—the Sunday-school Magazine for Teachers, the Youth's Friend, and the Infant's Magazine. It had distributed 6,098,899 copies of religious works, exclusive of reward tickets; it had 5,901 schools, 52,663 teachers, and 349,202 scholars. During the last year, 930 of the teachers were added to Christian churches by a distinct profession of religion, and 1,169 of the scholars!

7. The American Seaman's Friend Society was formed in January, 1826. Boarding-houses for seamen have been established at Boston and Charlestown. A Register Office for seamen wanting places has been opened. A Savings' Bank has been chartered; and Bethel Prayer-meetings are numerous. Bibles, Tracts, and preachers, have been supplied abundantly; and it is proposed to employ sea-missionaries to visit ports, where there is a great resort of British and American seamen. A missionary of this class has been sent by this society to China, to labour among our sailors at Canton! Ten places of worship for seamen have been opened in different parts of the republic, built on purpose for their accommodation, most of them large and commodious. In September, 1828, a Sailor's Magazine and Naval Journal was commenced for their instruction.

8. The General Union for Promoting the due Observance of the Sabbath, was formed by a most respectable delegation from the several states, which met in General Convention at the American Tract Society House, New York, May 6, 1828. During the year, 100,000 copies of "An Address to the People of the United States" were circulated. A deep impression was produced upon the public mind by this appeal on the sanctity of the Sabbath, and four hundred and sixty-nine petitions were presented to Congress, praying that the post office business, and the travelling of the mail, might be discontinued on the Sabbath; and though their prayer was not granted, yet it resolved to persevere until the Lord's-day shall be respected throughout the union!

9. The American Colonization Society was instituted at

Washington City, in 1817. Its object was to colonize in Africa, with their own consent, the free people of colour residing in the United States. A tract of country was purchased of the natives by American commissioners, at Cape Massarado and Paul River, on the western coast of Africa, where ten thousand slaves had been annually sold : it is now called Liberia. The colony has a regular government, under an American agent, and an adequate military force, formed by the males into a regular militia, to protect it against any attacks of the natives or of pirates. In 1829 there were shipped by this society, from the United States, four hundred and fifty-seven persons of colour, making nearly two thousand colonists, with whom at least ten thousand of the natives are in alliance. The colony has succeeded beyond the expectations of its projectors. Agriculture and commerce flourish among them ; and coffee, the produce of Liberia, has been an article of sale in New York. The colonists had been well instructed in America ; and a periodical paper is published in Liberia ! They all speak the English language, without any defect of pronunciation ; and they are well furnished with books, particularly Bibles, from America. Various public buildings have been erected, besides places of worship ; and several preachers of the gospel, of their own colour, have laboured among their brethren with great success. Sunday and other schools have been established for the colony, and among the native tribes, with the approbation of their chiefs. The number of free people of colour in the United States, is computed at more than 209,000 ; and of slaves, chiefly in the middle and southern states, more than 1,500,000 ! But this society having eleven state auxiliaries, and a hundred associations, tends to destroy slavery in America, as well as, by its colony, the slave trade in Africa. The senate of Virginia have recently voted 200,000 dollars per annum to this society !

10. The American Temperance Society was established at Boston, in February, 1826. Its object is to induce all classes to abstain from the use of distilled, intoxicating liquors, except as a medicine. The number of auxiliary societies, in 1829, was 1015, embracing more than 100,000 members. More than 700 drunkards were reported to have been reformed ; more than

50 distilleries stopped ; more than 400 dealers relinquished the trade from principle ; and more than 50 military bodies abstain from spirits on days of parade !

These are far from being the whole of the societies existing in America, formed to destroy the evils of sin, and to enlarge the boundaries of the church of God, by promoting pure, scriptural religion. And the churches have been so peculiarly distinguished by the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the means which have been employed, that the prevalence of piety among the people has justly excited the astonishment of all Christendom.

The following extract of a letter from a friend at New York to the Author, dated April 14, 1831, will most strikingly illustrate the active piety of the American Christians, and confirm our previous statement :—“ For these last three months we have had wonderful religious excitement in this city. The Presbyterian churches have been open three times a day, and four and five days in a week, for the especial purpose of prayer, that the Holy Spirit might be poured out upon our city. At first a great number of people laughed at it, and even other denominations of Christians thought it presumption in the Presbyterians to think they could help the Lord ; but after the first week or two, they found that the churches were so crowded, and the people seemed so deeply interested in all the addresses and prayers, that others opened their churches, and, last of all, the Episcopalians joined in. You can form no idea of the happy effect these meetings had upon hundreds ; all through the State the work was, and it is now, increasing. We have accounts of revivals in a great many colleges and other public institutions. Last Sunday the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was administered in our church by Dr. Cox. We had *one hundred and thirty-seven* new members ! *one hundred and twenty-three* of whom had never communed before : they were received upon confession of their faith : the others were received by certificate from other churches. There never was remembered so large an accession in any church in this city : the number of communicants now is upwards of six hundred. There is no doubt but the Lord has answered the prayer of his people !”

During the last twelve years, it has been ascertained, that in the State of New York alone, no less than seven hundred new congregations have been formed, enjoying the ordinances of religion !

CHAPTER XV.

BRITISH COLONIES.

GREAT BRITAIN possesses colonies so numerous and extensive, and in such various parts of the earth, that our limits will not allow us to survey the whole. Far too little has yet been done for them ; yet God has mercifully blessed the generous efforts of his servants, who have taken a commendable interest in their improvement and evangelization. We can mention only the principal places,—the West Indies, East Indies, and America.

SECTION I.—WEST INDIES.

Corrupt state of society in the West Indies—Number of slaves—Testimony of Dr. Williamson—Episcopate for Jamaica, and for Barbadoes—Depravity of the free people—Anti-slavery Reporter—Moravians—Methodists—Baptists.

EXCEPT Cuba and Hayti, most of the West India islands are British possessions. But these colonies are a curse to our country rather than a blessing, occasioning a fearful amount of national guilt by negro slavery, from which the profit of the planters is derived, and from the extremely corrupt state of society, which is inseparable from that abhorred system. According to the best computation, there are 800,000 wretched beings in our West Indies, thus denied the privileges of men, and regarded merely as cattle, bought and sold as beasts of the field ! We cannot stain our pages with a detail of the existing abominations which defile these islands, nor even hint at them, except so far as is necessary to illustrate the divinely beneficial labours of the Christian missionaries.

Jamaica is the largest of the British islands : it is divided

into twenty-one parishes, having about as many churches, with their appointed clergymen. The white population is about 30,000; the free persons of colour about 10,000; and about 300,000 slaves.

Dr. Williamson, a medical gentleman, who resided some years in Jamaica, says, “The manner in which the Sabbath is spent will appear extraordinary, and very contradictory to the duties inculcated on that day. A great market is kept by the negroes, which is in truth also a market for the whites. The merchants attend at their stores and counting-houses. On that day prayers are read; and it would be gratifying to add, that the subject was attended to. With deep regret it has often fallen to my lot to see the service of the church of England carelessly run through by the reverend members of its own community, and as indifferently attended to. It were, perhaps, well, in a comparative point of view, if that were all; for not only is the crime of inattention prevalent, but contempt for religion is openly avowed by a great proportion of the white population; and it is only shaken, in some instances, by irreligious conduct on the part of the whites. Those negroes who have conformed to Christianity by getting baptized, are in general exemplary, and much improved in the principles of morality. The propriety of matrimony is seldom impressed on their minds by the clergy or any other white person. Indeed, the latter themselves show the example of a libidinous course of life; and follow a promiscuous course of life which can scarcely be justified among savages.”*

Dr. Williamson pleaded for an episcopate being erected in the West Indies, with an increased number of clergymen; and his appeal was answered. In 1824 a bishop was appointed for Jamaica, and another for Barbadoes; but the improvement in these islands is scarcely in any degree advanced, except in a few instances: for the enormities and abominations above described still prevail among the whites; while the slaves are almost totally neglected, as is testified by the most satisfactory and authentic documents, published in the Anti-Slavery Reporter. We most particularly recommend those cheap tracts for the year 1831, in which are detailed atrocities, cruelties,

* Glasgow Geography, Vol. p. 84. 1832.

and impurities, characterizing the white inhabitants of Jamaica, sufficient to rouse the indignation of every virtuous mind, against a system so utterly repugnant to every principle of Christianity, of righteousness, and of national policy.

Seduction is considered no crime in Jamaica by the people generally! We cannot refrain from giving one illustration of this: "an authentic statement of the baptism of illegitimate and legitimate free children in the different passages in the island, in 1830, as taken from the Registry in the bishop's office in Spanish-town. (p. 24.) The account is confined to the *free*, there being no slave children that can be called legitimate! Legitimate, 380; illegitimate, 958. Total, 1,338."*

Familiarity with slavery, and the shocking state of depravity, its natural consequence, has a most pernicious influence even upon the clergy, unless they are evangelical in sentiment, and truly converted men of God. Though there are some few honourable exceptions in several of the islands, the clergy generally unite with the planters in justification of that awful stigma upon our nation,—Negro Slavery. Instead of instructing the negroes themselves, they transfer that care to the book-keepers on the several estates, who give them only oral instruction. "Few, if any, of these pretended instructors of our enslaved brethren in the Word and way of God are to be found, who are not living in the open and notorious violation of the laws of chastity, and of the sanctity of the Lords-day; and yet these are the men to whom the bishop of Jamaica and his brethren of the "Conversion Society" intrust the exposition and inculcation of the scriptural faith and the Christian practices taught and enjoined by the formularies of the church of England."

After a review of the Reports of the "Society for the Conversion of Slaves," and the "Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts," for 1830, the Anti-Slavery Reporter for Dec. 1831, says, "The Christian Record of Jamaica, for April, 1831, No. 8, exhibits, among other things, a document which, if it be true, is decisive on the subject, and the Editor boldly challenges an investigation of its correctness. It is a detailed

* Anti-Slavery Reporter, Feb. 1832.

and specific enumeration of the slaves in Jamaica, who, in 1829, were receiving a ‘lettered and effective education, in connexion with the established church;’ and it amounts on the whole, out of a population of 330,000, to 601, ‘of whom 391 are educated by the Church Missionary Society, and 210 by the bishops and the rest of the establishment.’ That is to say, for an annual sum of about £9,600 expended from the public purse on the ecclesiastical establishment of Jamaica, aided by the funds of the Societies for the Conversion of Slaves and for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 210 negro slave children are being taught letters, so as to be put in the way of being able to read their Bibles.

“ But why, it may be asked, do we thus visit with the severity of our animadversions, this particular (Conversion) Society? Are there no defects in the proceedings of the Church Missionary Society, of the Missionary Society of the United Brethren, of the Methodists, of the Baptists, and of the London Missionary Society? These however, at least, are not sustained, as this is, by any grants of public money. Neither the Moravian bishops, nor the ministers and catechists of the Methodists, and Baptists, and Independents, nor yet those of the Church Missionary Society, are paid from the public purse; nor are their churches or chapels reared, in any measure, at the public expense. We therefore have a right to scrutinize somewhat more closely the proceedings and pretensions of this particular Society.”

Our limits will not allow us to go into the detail of the missionary operations and successes of the different denominations of Christians, among the slaves in the several islands. Labours the most self-denying, generous, and persevering, have marked the progress of the Moravians, Methodists, and Baptists, especially among the injured negroes. From the interested planters and their ungodly agents, these devoted ministers of Christ have endured obloquy and scorn, and sometimes imprisonment, as the reward of their divine benevolence. Every expression of contempt has been uttered against them, by those whose licentious lives proclaimed their enmity against God, while their Divine Master has crowned their faithful ministry of mercy with success in the conversion and salvation

of thousands of souls. For the year 1830, the Moravians report, that they have 37,000 in their congregations. The Methodists report 24,439 slaves, 7,213 free blacks, and 1,206 whites, in their society. The Baptists report "10,000 members in church fellowship. The number of 'Enquirers' amounts to double that number."

SECTION II.—EAST INDIES.

Design of Providence in subjecting India to Britain—Wretched state of its population—Neglect of its religious interests—Dr. Buchanan's testimony—Mr. Thomas first preacher to the Hindoos—Baptist Missions—Dr. Carey—Renewal of the Charter—College at Fort William—Dr. Carey's address to the Governor General—Missionary labours in India—Beneficial consequences—Pious soldiers—Dr. Morrison—Translation of the Scriptures into Chinese—Henry Martyn.

DIVINE Providence has granted to Britain immense territorial possessions in the East, teeming with a population of little short of two hundred millions of souls! This has been done, doubtless, for the purpose of evangelizing them; though the accumulation of wealth has been almost exclusively the object of the men who have occupied important stations in those distant regions. Scarcely any attention was paid even to our own countrymen, before the Baptist missionaries entered upon their works of evangelical mercy. Dr. Buchanan, in his "Memoir" for an "Ecclesiastical Establishment in India," written in 1805, says, "Of the whole number of Europeans, who come out to India, a tenth part do not return. When they leave England, they leave their religion for ever. Of a thousand soldiers in sickly India, there will generally be a hundred who are in a declining state of health; who, after a long struggle with the climate and with intemperance, have fallen into a dejected state of mind, and pass their time in painful reflection on their distant homes, their absent families, and on the indiscretions of past life; but whose hearts would revive within them on their entering once more the house of God, and hearing the absolution of the gospel to the returning sinner. The oblivion of the Sabbath in India, is that

which properly constitutes banishment from our country. For want of divine service, Europeans in general, instead of keeping the Sabbath, profane it openly.

"The present establishment of English chaplains for the British empire is six military chaplains for Bengal, Bahar, Oude, the Dooab, and Orissa. There are three chaplains in the town of Calcutta, five at the Presidency of Madras, and four at the Presidency of Bombay. Nor is this list ever full. At the establishment at Bencoolen, at the factory at Canton, at the flourishing settlement of Prince of Wales' Island, at Malacca, at Amboyna, and at the other islands to the eastward, now in their possession, there is not a single clergyman of the English church. The two British armies in Hindostan, and in the Dekhan, lately in the field, had not one chaplain. And as to the state of religion among a people who have no divine service, it is such as might be expected."

Such was the extended but destitute field into which many devoted missionaries have been sent by the several denominations of Christians in Britain, in answer to prayer, that the Holy Spirit might be poured upon the wretched population. It deserves here to be recorded, that Mr. Thomas, a pious surgeon, and a Baptist, on his arrival in India a second time, in 1786, established a weekly prayer-meeting of a few pious persons, among whom was the late Honourable C. Grant. Thomas preached to this little flock on a Sabbath evening; and at the same time God stirred up the minds of his people in England, so that on his return, Mr. Thomas was prevailed on by the Baptists to engage as a missionary in company with Dr. Carey. Thomas had learned Bengalee; he had preached to the natives; and translated into their language several of the books of the Bible; and with a soul devoted to God, set sail for Calcutta with his worthy colleague, in June, 1793. Since that period, blessings have been richly poured upon India, though much opposition was made to missionary labours by the Company.

On the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1813, it was provided that Christian missionaries should have liberty to prosecute their labours in India, enjoying full protection. The church of England establishment was extended to India,

and a bishop was appointed for Calcutta. Drs. Middleton, Heber, and James, have successively occupied that dignity, under whom the number of clergymen has been nearly doubled, at the several stations in the East.

Christianity has been greatly aided by the establishment of a college at Fort William, Calcutta, in 1800, by Marquis Wellesley, the Governor General. Dr. Carey, the learned Baptist missionary, was appointed teacher and professor of Bengalee and Shanscrit, and Clotworthy Gowan, Esq., one of the students, had the honour of delivering the first speech in the Shanscrit language, when Dr. Carey, in the same language, addressed his pupil and the Governor General, who was present at the fourth anniversary. A translation of those eloquent addresses, with a high testimony to the learning of that distinguished missionary, Dr. Buchanan has preserved in his "Memorial." From the latter address we cannot forbear giving a few extracts :—“ My Lord, it is just, that the language which has been first cultivated under your auspices, should primarily be employed in gratefully acknowledging the benefit, and in speaking your praise. This ancient language, which refused to disclose itself to the former governors of India, unlocks its treasures at your command, and enriches the world with the history, learning, and science, of a distant age. What a singular exhibition has been this day presented to us! In presence of the supreme governor of India, and of its most learned and illustrious characters, Asiatic and European, an assembly is convened, in which no word of our native tongue is spoken, but public discourse is maintained on interesting subjects in the languages of Asia. The colloquial Hindooostanee, the classic Persian, the commercial Bengalee, the learned Arabic, and the Primæval Shanscrit, are spoken fluently, after having been studied grammatically, by English youth. Did ever any university in Europe, or any literary institution in any other age or country, exhibit a scene so interesting as this? The acquisitions of *our* students are appreciated, at this moment, by those learned Asiatics now present in this assembly, some of them strangers from distant provinces; who wonder every man to hear, in his own tongue, important subjects discussed, and new and noble principles asserted,

by the youth of a foreign land. I, now an old man, have lived for a long series of years among the Hindoos ; I have been in the habit of preaching to multitudes daily, of discoursing with the Brahmins on every subject, and of superintending schools for the instruction of Hindoo youth. Their language is nearly as familiar to me as my own. I may say, indeed, that their manners, customs, habits, and sentiments, are as obvious to me as if I myself were a native. And knowing them as I do, and hearing, as I do, their daily observations on our government, character, and principles, I am warranted to say, that the institution of this college was wanting to complete the happiness of the natives under our dominion. One hundred original volumes in the oriental languages and literature, will preserve for ever in Asia the name of the founder of this institution. Nor are the examples frequent of a renown possessing such utility for its basis, or pervading such a vast portion of the habitable globe. My lord, you have raised a monument of fame, which no length of time, or reverse of fortune, is able to destroy ; not chiefly because it is inscribed with Mahratta or Mysore, with the trophies of war, and the emblems of victory ; but because there are inscribed on it the names of those learned youths who have obtained degrees of honour for high proficiency in the oriental tongues. These youths will rise in regular succession to the government of this country. They will extend the domain of British civilization, security, and happiness, by enlarging the bounds of oriental literature, and thereby diffusing the spirit of Christian principles throughout the nations of Asia. To whatever situation the course of future events may call you, the youth of this service will ever remain the pledges of the wisdom and purity of your government. Your evening of life will be constantly cheered with the testimonies of their reverence and affection, with new proofs of the advantages of the education you have afforded them, and with a demonstration of the numerous benefits, moral, religious, and political, resulting from this institution,—benefits which will consolidate the happiness of millions in Asia with the glory and welfare of our country.”*

* Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India, p. 84—88, 4to.

By the evangelical labours of the missionaries of the London and Baptist Societies particularly, a new face of things appears in India. The blessed Word of God, translated by the Baptist missionaries of Serampore, into thirty-five languages and dialects of India, and circulated among the natives; the establishment of schools in very many places for the education of the young; and the direct preaching of the gospel by the missionaries, have been eminently sanctioned of God to the salvation of many souls. Most of the English regiments and companies of soldiers, through the labours of their zealous countrymen, have pious men among them, and little churches of those who hold their social meetings for prayer and reading the Scriptures. Some of the officers, and even of the privates, officiate as preachers to their comrades, as the means of their spiritual edification and consolation. Bible, Missionary, and School Societies have been formed at Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and other places, under the influence of which, fruits of the most excellent character have been of the noblest kind.

Our brief limits will by no means allow us to particularize the various stations occupied by the missionaries from the several societies, in the British colonies of the East. The glorious gospel of the blessed God is now faithfully preached by excellent men from the Baptist, London, Church, Methodist, Scottish, and American Missionary Societies, at Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Ceylon, Malacca, Singapore, and in many other places of those immensely populous regions, to the conversion and salvation of perishing sinners. See Book IX.

Next to the labours of Dr. Carey and his brethren the Baptists, at Serampore, the extraordinary works of Dr. Morrison, a Congregational Independent, of the London Missionary Society, are to be acknowledged. Assisted by the late lamented Dr. Milne, his amiable colleague, he has translated the whole Bible into the Chinese, and compiled a dictionary of that difficult language, spoken by about one-third of the human population. That worthy and devoted missionary has also translated the Common Prayer for the friends of the church of England.

Various are the means which are now employed in the East, by the establishment of schools, the preaching of the gospel to the natives, in their several languages, by the missionaries of

different societies, and the circulation of the Scriptures, and religious tracts and books, upon which God is graciously pouring down his blessing. Thus is He carrying on his work of mercy for the ultimate evangelization of the teeming population of those "dark places of the earth."

Sacred to the memory of Christian excellence, we must give a record of the late Rev. Henry Martyn, one of the Company's chaplains. He possessed, in an uncommon degree, the spirit of a missionary for Christ. His whole soul appeared to be absorbed in the conversion of the heathen. He arrived in India in 1806, and devoted himself to the welfare of his countrymen, and of the natives, by preaching the gospel. In 1810, he sailed for Persia, into whose language he translated the New Testament and the Psalms. But on returning to England, this amiable servant of Christ died of fever at Tocat, in Asia Minor, in 1812, in the thirty-second year of his age!

SECTION III.—BRITISH AMERICA.

Canada originally a French colony—Roman Catholic the established church—Toleration—Missionaries and schools of the Propagation Society—Methodists—British and Foreign Society's schools—Montreal—Rev. Mr. Miles—Circulation of the Scriptures.

CANADA was originally a French colony; of course the people were Roman Catholics. Theirs is still the "established church," but with full toleration for every denomination of Christians. This country was ceded to the British in 1766. In 1793, Upper and Lower Canada were erected into a bishop's see. At Quebec, the capital, there is a commodious metropolitan church, denominated a cathedral. Government encourages new settlers to take out with them ministers of whatever denomination they may choose; to whom a portion of land is granted towards their support.

The "Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts," as stated in the Report for 1830, employs 135 missionaries and assistants, in the towns and villages of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland; and 100 schoolmasters. But little is reported of their zeal, efficacy, and success; but the

schoolmasters are reported as having 135 scholars in the Canadas under their care, and 4,159 in the other countries.

The English Methodists have a number of missionaries in these provinces; and in 1830, there were reported 5,906 persons in their society.

Besides the teachers of schools of the Propagation Society, the British and Foreign School system has been adopted in Canada under teachers trained in England. Various regulations have been made by the government for the education of the population; and W. Lunn, Esq., of Montreal, in a letter dated Dec. 28, 1830, says, "I have learnt from good authority that upwards of 700 schools have been established in the country in Lower Canada, and containing about 15,000 children."

Montreal is said to be nearly as populous as Quebec; having more than 30,000 inhabitants, the greater part of whom are Catholics. There are at present only six Protestant places of worship: one is Episcopalian, one American, and two Scotch Presbyterian, a Methodist, and a Baptist:—some of them not very numerous. The Rev. Mr. Miles, from England, recently arrived at Montreal, and avowed himself a Congregational minister: he opened a school for a place of worship on the first Sabbath, when many united with him; and, for the purpose of building a new chapel, about a hundred pounds were immediately subscribed. The Holy Scriptures, and religious tracts, have been circulated in great numbers, and many worthy persons are alive and active in that country in propagating the gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER XVII.

RUSSIA.

Greek church of Russia—Its constitution—Bible Society—Emperor forced to support it—Dissenters—Various denominations in Russia—Rev. Mr. Knill.

RUSSIA, though separated from the Greek church, retains its forms and creeds as the established religion. The number of its members is computed to amount to 32,000,000, and his

imperial majesty is the head of the church, under whom it is governed by a grand national council of ecclesiastics. Government having seized most of the church property, the clergy, about 70,000 in number, are paid out of the public funds. Religion, however, is reduced by them to the performance of numerous superstitious ceremonies: but greatly beneficial effects, it is believed, have followed the establishment of the Russian Bible Society, in 1813, patronized by the late emperor Alexander, and placed under the presidency of prince Galitzin.

A more intolerant policy was forced upon Alexander before his death; and the operations of the Bible Society were suspended in 1826: but about 800,000 Bibles and Testaments were put in circulation, in the several languages spoken in the Russian empire, by the society; and we cannot but hope that they will be blessed of the Holy Spirit to the salvation of many souls, and become the means of a future glorious revival of religion among those tribes of mankind.

Besides the established church, there are other denominations, who profess the faith of Christ, in Russia; we will briefly notice them.

The Dissenters, (Raskonliks,) the most ardent lovers of the Holy Scriptures in this empire: they are supposed to amount to about 1,000,000 of persons. The Armenians are about 200,000; the Lutherans, about 2,000,000; the Reformed, or Calvinists, about 400,000; the Moravians have many adherents and converts; the Mennonites, or Baptists, are about 10,000; the Roman Catholics are about 2,000,000.

At Petersburgh, the Rev. Mr. Knill, of the London Missionary Society, has a congregational church under his care, consisting of several hundred members and hearers, and his usefulness in various ways appears to have been very considerable. Mr. Knill's labours have brought us acquainted with several persons of eminent piety, and we cannot but hope for glorious things to arise for the church of God in that ignorant and superstitious empire.

CHAPTER XVIII.—GREEK AND EASTERN CHURCHES.

Various denominations in the eastern nations—Circulation of the Scriptures in the several languages by the Bible Society—Turkish war—Missionaries—Scriptures among the Jews—Malabar Christians.

CHRISTIANITY in the East is professed by at least thirty millions of persons. These are scattered throughout part of the Austrian and various provinces of the Turkish empire, under different denominations:—the Greek church, of which the patriarch of Constantinople is the head, the Georgians, Jacobites, Armenians, Copts, Abyssinians, Nestorians, and the Hindoo-Syrians of Malabar. These different communions still remain in a miserable state of ignorance, superstition, and wretchedness. The Holy Scriptures are but little known among them; but the British and Foreign Bible Society has directed considerable attention to their necessities; and from their “Brief View” of the Society’s operations it appears, that they have circulated nearly 200,000 copies of parts of the Bible for their use in their several languages.

To detail all the cruelties which have been exercised upon the Christians by the Turkish rulers, especially in the late Greek war of independence, would require volumes. Multitudes, under that despotic government, have been beheaded and strangled, on the most trifling suspicions. Scio, one of the most important Greek islands,—the ancient Chio,—having churches and a college, has been almost depopulated by the Turks, in a military massacre! Out of 130,000 inhabitants, not more than a thousand remained; and much promising fruit was destroyed. The Bible Society, having agents in those parts, furnished the survivors with the Word of Life, to comfort them in their calamity. Several missionaries belonging to the London, the Church, and the American Societies, have stations at Corfu and Malta. By their labours in preaching the gospel, much good has been done. Bibles and religious tracts have been extensively circulated, and many schools have been established on the British system. Messrs. Leeves,

Lowndes, and Wilson, of the London Missionary Society, have been eminently useful in the translation of the Scriptures, and other valuable religious books, into Modern Greek; of which latter, there were circulated by them, during the last three years, no less than 30,522 copies.

Several agents of the Bible Society have circulated thousands of copies of parts of the Holy Scriptures at Constantinople, Smyrna, and other places; and the seed of the Word of God has sprung up in the conversion of many to the true faith of Christ, among whom are several Jews. Mr. Wolff, a converted Jew, has been zealously labouring as a missionary to his brethren in Palestine, and at Jerusalem.

Among all that profess the name of Christ in the East, none appear more interesting than the Christians of St. Thomas, on the Malabar coast. They include about forty-five congregations, and about 80,000 persons; whom Dr. Buchanan having visited in 1806, represents as far superior to their pagan neighbours, yet deplorably destitute of the Scriptures, few having ever seen any part of them. For their use, the New Testament has been translated into their language, and printed by the Bible Society; and their liturgy has been printed by the Church Missionary Society.

CHAPTER XIX.—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Popery unchangeably hostile to the circulation of the Scriptures—Prevails in several countries of Europe and South America—Papal power become contemptible—Cut off from the state in France—Scriptural efforts in popish countries—Romish establishment in India—Canada—America—Ireland—Increase of Catholics in England.

POPERY is unchangeable in its principles and character, ever manifesting a determined hostility to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures among the people. This system of corrupted religion still retains its intolerant domination in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Austria, and the states of South America; and its priests cherish their rooted enmity to general education, because knowledge has ever been fatal to their unrighteous claims, and unscriptural impositions. The mass of the popu-

lation, therefore, in those fine countries, except part of Austria, remains in the most debasing ignorance, and overwhelmed with a degrading superstition.

As a temporal prince, the political power of the Pope is now regarded with absolute contempt by all the European governments; but it is still supported by them as a matter of policy.

France, more particularly, appears almost ready to throw off entirely the trammels of the papal yoke; for, as the Catholic priesthood has been found uniformly to give its support to an arbitrary form of government, and to neglect the instruction of the people, the Bourbon dynasty has been overthrown by the Revolution of this year, (1830,) and the Romish church cut off from being the established religion, and free toleration granted. Still, as the Roman Catholic is the professed religion of the majority in the French nation, its clergy at present continue to receive their usual salaries from the new government.

So grossly have the French been deluded with the popish ceremonies and superstitions, that the more intelligent have become infidels. Such, indeed, is the case throughout the Roman Catholic countries, and especially in Italy; the people therefore are ill prepared, at present, to embrace the pure Christianity of the New Testament, of which, indeed, they are almost universally ignorant. Nevertheless, the vigorous efforts of some devoted servants of Christ at Paris, with several agents from the Methodist, Continental, London, and Baptist Missionary Societies in England, and especially with the revival of religion among the Protestants of the south of France, as we have noticed in chapter IX., all contributing to the circulation of the Scriptures, and the diffusion of Divine knowledge, will, we trust, be blessed of God to produce an evangelical reformation in that great country.

Education being vigorously promoted through many parts of Germany, and the Holy Scriptures being extensively circulated, popery will not be able much longer to retain its hold on the millions in Austria and Hungary. Even the Italian States, and Rome itself, have received many copies of the blessed Word of God; and it is believed, that not a few Catholics, and

some of the priests, are sincerely studying the Scriptures of truth for their eternal salvation. Knowledge, by the British system of education, is increasing in South America; and with it, the Holy Scriptures are circulated among the superstitious Catholics.

In British India and the East, the Roman Catholic church has an establishment of three archbishops and seventeen bishops, with many priests, besides Romish missionaries; but scriptural knowledge, as we have seen, is advancing in those populous regions of the earth.

Canada has the Roman Catholic system for the established religion; and efforts are being made to extend the influence of popery in the United States of America, particularly in the wondrous Valley of the Mississippi; but its antidote is provided in the Bible.

Ireland is chiefly popish; and in that injured, degraded, and distracted country, there are nearly five thousand Roman Catholic priests. But scriptural light and knowledge are advancing among the people, notwithstanding their prejudices against the Protestants.

England, at the commencement of this century, it is said, had not quite fifty Roman Catholic chapels; now it has about four hundred and fifty: but this cannot be matter of wonder, when we consider the amazing increase of our population; the influx of Irish; and the ignorance of multitudes of our countrymen concerning the essentials of religion as taught in the New Testament. But a scriptural education of the people, with the diligent and faithful preaching of the gospel, will be the effectual means of subverting every false system of religion, and of converting the ignorant millions of mankind to the saving knowledge of God in Christ Jesus.

BOOK NINTH.

PROTESTANT MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

CHAPTER I.—EARLY EFFORTS AND SOCIETIES.

Christianity essentially Missionary—Exemplified by Christians—Review delightful—Protestant efforts—John Calvin—Gustavus Vasa—Independents—Dr. Calamy's plan—Dutch at Ceylon—Protector Cromwell's plan—Mr. Baxter's chartered society—Mr. Gowie's society.

CHRISTIANITY is essentially missionary in its spirit ; embracing in its benevolence the utmost latitude and longitude of the habitable earth. To cherish and to act upon this principle our blessed Lord enjoined his disciples, when he commanded them to “go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Nor did he leave them comfortless, in the prospect of the painful duty ; but added, “ Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

Sincere and intelligent Christians, in every age, influenced by the Saviour's grace, have been constrained to regard his injunctions as obligatory upon themselves : at the same time they have rejoiced in his merciful promise, while contemplating the immutable word of inspired prophecy, “ The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Already have we been led to notice many admirable and successful efforts, made by evangelical missionaries, before the period of the Reformation ; but we now turn with delightful astonishment to review some, at least, of the principal of those operations, which have been carried on by Protestants since that glorious event. Nor can we properly understand the true state of the church of God at the present time, and its promising aspect towards future ages, without a view of its machinery in scriptural missions.

I. John Calvin appears to deserve the honour of being acknowledged as the first among the Protestants who contemplated the conversion of the heathen. In the year 1556, under his auspices, a Missionary Society was formed at Geneva, for the purpose of sending the light of the pure gospel of Christ to the uninstructed Indians of South America. Several missionaries were sent to Brazil; but their success was blasted by the commandant of the colony: for he apostatized from the profession of the gospel; and with cruelty persecuted the servants of Christ, and drove them from the country.

II. Gustavus Vasa, king of Sweden, in 1559, sent Michael as missionary into Lapland. He issued a royal mandate, commanding the Laplanders to assemble at a certain period in winter, to pay their tribute, and at the same time to receive Christian instruction, which he had provided for their salvation.

III. The Nonconformists, who first colonized North America, employed various efforts by missionaries, to evangelize the Indians: but in 1646, an act was passed in Massachusetts, to make provision for that benevolent work; and John Eliot, if not the first, was the most successful missionary, as we have seen, and deservedly called "The Apostle of the Indians." In surveying America, we considered the labours of Eliot.

IV. In 1647, Dr. Calamy, Mr. Whitaker, and Mr. Marshal, submitted to the Long Parliament an account of Mr. Eliot's labours and successes among the Indians, and they referred the subject to the Committee for Foreign Plantations, recommending them to prepare a "Bill for the Promotion of Piety and Learning in New England." This measure was brought forward, and an Act was passed, July, 1649, to encourage the instruction of the Indians. It was ordained by the Act, that the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England should receive and dispose of the monies which might be collected for that purpose. Collections were made throughout the parishes in England, and an estate purchased of about £600 per annum. From these proceeds Mr. Eliot was assisted in his immortal labours among the Indians.

V. Ceylon was blessed with the light of evangelical truth about the year 1656, after the Dutch had wrested the island

from the Portuguese. But the efforts of the Dutch teachers were in most instances, perhaps, of doubtful success, if not the means of making many merely nominal Christians; as they ordained that no native should hold any office, unless he subscribed the Helvetic Confession of Faith; and thus became a member of the Reformed church. Those who aspired after dignity or office professed their readiness to receive the new religion; as the only qualification of the candidates to be recognised as members was, to learn the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments; a short morning and evening prayer, and a grace before and after meat. In the district of Jaffnapatam alone, in 1663, there were church registers of 62,558 men and women who professed Christianity; besides 2,587 slaves, and 12,387 children.

VI. Oliver Cromwell, as we are informed by bishop Burnet, projected, in 1656, a grand Missionary Society: it was to consist of seven counsellors, and four secretaries for different provinces: the first for France, Switzerland, and Piedmont; the second, for the Palatinate, and the Calvinists of other provinces; the third for Germany, the North of Europe, and Turkey; and the fourth for the East and West Indies. Each secretary was to have a salary of £500 per annum; and they were to hold a correspondence with all parts of the world, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of religion in them, and of sending forth well qualified evangelical missionaries. The society was to be provided with £10,000 per annum, and more, if required; and Chelsea College was to be fitted up as a mission house. "Certainly," as bishop Burnet observes, "this was a magnificent project, and must have been attended with extraordinary effects under a power which was formidable and terrible to all nations to whom it was known." This noble scheme, however, was not matured, by reason of the death of Cromwell, in 1658, though some assistance was rendered to the missionaries in North America.

In 1663, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Henry Ashworth, and the Honourable Robert Boyle, having taken a lively interest in the work of evangelization among the American Indians, and seeing the Charter of 1649 become void at the Restoration, used their influence with chancellor Hyde, and obtained a new charter

for the incorporating of “A Society or Company for Propagating the Gospel in New England and the parts adjacent in America.” Colonel Bedingfield having seized the estate which he had formerly sold to the Company, Mr. Boyle obtained a decree of the Court of Chancery, by which it was restored, and he was appointed governor of the new Corporation, by whose supplies many useful schoolmasters and evangelical missionaries were supported among the Indians.

VIII. Dr. Thomas Gouge, after his ejection from the church, in 1662, formed a Society, about 1670, for the propagation of the Gospel in Wales; of which indeed himself was the chief contributor and the chief agent. Archbishop Tillotson, in his funeral sermon for him, states, “He had two excellent designs; one, to have poor children brought up to read and write, and to be carefully instructed in the principles of religion: the other, to furnish the poor with the Bible, and other books of piety and devotion. To this end he procured the Church Catechism, the Practice of Piety, and the Whole Duty of Man, to be translated into Welsh, and sent down to the chief towns in Wales, for sale at easy rates, or given away to those who could not buy them. About a thousand children annually were instructed, and an edition of the Bible, about eight thousand, was published and circulated.”

In a blank leaf of a Welsh Bible, in the library of the duke of Bedford, is the following interesting inscription:—

“To the Right Hon. the earl of Bedford, knight of the noble order of the Garter. In thankful acknowledgment of his bounty to Wales, in contributing towards the charge of printing the thousand Bibles in the British language, which were freely given to poor families, and of teaching many hundreds of poor children to read and write. Signed, J. Tillotson—E. Stillingfleet—B. Whichol—J. Meriton—T. Gouge—B. Calamy—T. Firmin—J. du Bois.”

CHAPTER II.—MISSIONARY SOCIETIES NOW IN OPERATION.

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge—Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts—Society for sending Missionaries to India—Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland—Moravian Missionary Society—Book Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor—Naval and Military Bible Society—Methodist Missionary Society—Sunday-school Society—Baptist Missionary Society—London Missionary Society—Scottish Missionary Society—Village Itinerancy, or Evangelical Association for Spreading the Gospel in England—London Itinerant Society—Baptist Home Missionary Society—Religious Tract Society—Church Missionary Society—Sunday-school Union—British and Foreign Bible Society—British and Foreign School Society—London Hibernian Society—Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews—Prayer Book and Homily Society—Irish Evangelical Society—Baptist Irish Society—Irish Society—Continental Society—Port of London Society—Home Missionary Society—Ladies' Hibernian Female School Society—Christian Instruction Society—British Society for Promoting the Religious Principles of the Reformation.

I. In 1698 “the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge” originated. It was formed, as bishop Burnet observes, after the example of the Dissenters, whose missionary labours and successes in America had been noticed by some pious clergymen with devout admiration. The design of this society was, at first, the circulation of the Bible, and other religious books in our colonies: but seeing their efforts were productive of fruit in America and the West Indies, they were induced to send out several missionaries, and took measures to render their society permanent in its operations. In 1700 it was divided into two branches; one retaining its original title, to provide and furnish Bibles and religious books; the other undertook to provide for the religious instruction of the British colonies. Until the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, this institution was comparatively lifeless and inactive; but since that event, its efforts have been so wonderfully increased, that the report for 1828 states, that during the year it had issued 58,582 Bibles, 80,246 Testaments and Psalters, 153,421 Common Prayers, 106,552 other bound books, and 1,257,315 small tracts, half-bound books and papers. Its re-

ceipts, including sales of books, legacies, subscriptions, &c., had been £68,540. There has been some increase in the society during the last two years, but the above is our latest report.

Truth and charity seem to require us to observe, that this is peculiarly the Church of England Society ; and the great body of its supporters object to the British and Foreign Bible Society, as unnecessary, declaring their conviction that this alone is sufficient. But it will be seen that this society issues the Bible in no more than *two foreign languages*, besides the Welsh, and those two the French and Arabic ; while the British and Foreign Bible Society circulates the Word of God in more than one hundred and fifty languages !

Many of the publications of this society are excellent, valuable, and useful ; but others are complained of as objectionable and pernicious, especially on account of two serious errors. The first is Baptismal Regeneration, defended particularly by bishop Mant and others, but denounced as an unscriptural delusion by the most eminent evangelical divines of the church of England, among whom are the Rev. Mr. Simeon, Mr. D. Wilson, and Mr. Scott, the commentator. The second error is that doctrine first broached among Protestants by Dr. Bancroft, in 1588, of the Divine right of episcopal prelacy. By this false doctrine, the ordination of the great body of Protestants in France, Switzerland, Holland, Prussia, America, the church of Scotland, and the Dissenters of all denominations, is presumptuously declared invalid ; as one of their late publications says of every minister not episcopally ordained, “ He is destitute of the necessary credentials of an ambassador of Christ. He has no title to the ministerial commission. His ministry can have no claim to that promise of the Divine presence which was given by our Saviour.” Some of the publications contain expressions still more uncharitable ; and sentiments on these points directly contrary to those held by all the reformers, the martyrs, and the founders of the church of England ; contrary also to those held by the most evangelical and useful of the clergy at the present time ; as they perceive, and some of them acknowledge, that no class of Christian ministers, in any age of the church, has been more highly honoured with the Divine presence and blessing, in the conversion of sinners,

or the translation of the Scriptures, than the English Dissenters.

II. "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," arose, as we have stated in the preceding article. King William saw, not only the excellency of that society, but the importance of the vast field thus opened, and became the patron of that good work. As the "Abstract of the Charter" states, "King William III. was graciously pleased, on the 16th of June, 1701, to erect and settle a corporation, with a perpetual succession, by the name" above given. Large contributions were raised by many of the bishops and clergy, who took up the business with great zeal, and sent missionaries to the British colonies in America, and since to the West Indies. Among the most devoted originators and promoters of this society, it is but just to mention the names of those pious prelates, Burnet, Beveridge, and Tennison. This society has continued its operations to the present day, but not with any remarkable zeal; nor has it ever been distinguished by agents of superior talents for translating the Scriptures into the languages of the heathen, or for labours in their conversion. Schwartz and his predecessors belonged properly to the Danish society next to be mentioned. This society, as reported in 1830, supports 140 clergymen, under the denomination of missionaries, though they are rather settled ministers among the English in British America; and 106 schoolmasters, who are reported to have 4,294 scholars under their instruction. This society is regarded by the evangelical clergy as not conducted on evangelical principles; and its retaining the negroes in a state of debasing slavery, for a hundred years, on the Codrington estates in Barbadoes, is complained of as an outrage upon religion and righteousness. The Anti-slavery Reporter, in reviewing the Report of this society for 1830, says, in reference to the marriage of the slaves, "We cannot discover that a single marriage had ever occurred prior to the 28th of May, 1830, when three were solemnized, a fourth only on the 8th of July, after the bishop's letter was written, making a total of four; being all that we can discover to have ever taken place on these estates containing nearly 400 slaves." (See Anti-slavery Reporter for December, 1831.) The receipts of the

year were £32,037 17s. 8d. ; of which £7,422 6s. 1d. were voluntary contributions, and £15,532 were grants from the government.

III. In 1705, a “Society for sending missionaries to India,” was established by Frederick IV., king of Denmark, at the suggestion of one of his chaplains. The design was to make known the gospel of Christ among the Malabar Indians on the coast of Coromandel. Application was made to the celebrated professor Frank, for suitable agents educated under him at Halle. The mission in reality had partly originated with him, and two young men of sound learning and apostolic piety were found ready to enter upon the work of their Saviour. Bartholomew Zeigenbalg and Henry Plutscho were the first missionaries. On their voyage these devoted men studied the Portuguese and the Malabar languages, and were soon enabled to commence preaching to the natives ; some of whom in a short period embraced the gospel of Christ. They prepared a dictionary and grammar in the Malabar language, into which they succeeded in translating the New Testament. These they printed, with many other books which they composed for their followers. Both of these devoted men returned to Europe after about seven years ; and being recommended to the “Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in England,” they were introduced to its governors, Mr. Plutscho in 1712, and Mr. Zeigenbalg in 1715. The latter was honoured with an audience of king George I., who condescended to encourage the missionaries, by a letter written in 1717, in reply to an interesting communication from them. Several more devoted men, who had been trained at Halle, were sent to aid these first missionaries, whose labours in preaching, translating the Scriptures, writing books full of Divine instruction, teaching many schools of the young, were extraordinary in themselves, and worthy of the apostles of Christ ; and the published letters of Zeigenbalg, Plutscho, Grundler, and Frank, their tutor, breathe the most ardent piety and the purest love to the souls of men. This mission received great support from the English society, by whom a printing establishment was furnished, with a German printer. Our limits will allow us only to say, they were eminently and extensively useful. Schwartz was

one of their most distinguished missionaries. From the Danish Society he arrived at Tranquebar in 1752; he lived and laboured for the Indians, by whom, as well as by the Europeans, he was most highly respected. He died in 1798. The memoirs of his devoted life is worthy of perusal by all our readers, affording a rare example of a Christian minister.

IV. In 1709, at Edinburgh, there was formed the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland." This was sanctioned by the General Assembly, and collections were made for its support. Copies of the proposed plans being circulated, large subscriptions were afforded, and queen Anne issued her royal proclamation in its favour, and her Letters Patent, under the great seal of Scotland, for erecting it into a corporation. Schools in the Highlands, and various other means were employed; but they afforded assistance also to the Susquehannah and Delaware Indians in America. Brainerd was one of their missionaries, or greatly supported by them; and his itinerant labours, and evangelical success, in bringing guilty men to embrace the salvation of Jesus Christ, have scarcely ever been surpassed.

V. In 1732, the Moravian Missions commenced. Missionary labours and triumphs have pre-eminently distinguished this people; and theirs is considered the eminent honour to have excited that spirit among other denominations of Christians. Leonard Dober and Tobias Leupold offered to go to teach the negroes of St. Thomas, declaring they were willing to sell themselves for slaves, if needful, to accomplish their object in imparting to them the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ. Leonard Dober and David Nitschman set out in August of that year, to the Danish West Indies; and others in 1733 proceeded to Greenland, where the way had been opened by the fifteen years' labour of Paul Egede, a Danish clergyman. In 1734, some of the Moravian brethren went to North America; in 1736, others went to South Africa; in 1738, to South America; and in 1760, several others to the East Indies. Volumes are required to detail the various operations of these apostolic men; their self-denying, evangelical labours—their peculiar perils and hardships—and their Divine successes in turning

men "from the power of Satan to God." Primitive, apostolical Christianity has never been more strikingly illustrated by any people, than by the missionaries of this denomination; and God has graciously granted that their fruit should correspond with their exertions. It is computed, that the Moravian missionaries have about fifty thousand converts among the heathen. They have in the West Indies about 80 missionaries, and about 35,000 negro converts; in South America 10 missionaries, and about 2,000 negro converts; in North America 12 missionaries, and about 3,000 native converts; in Labrador, among the Esquimaux, 26 missionaries; and in Greenland 20 missionaries. Their wives are included in this enumeration. The receipts for the year 1829 were £9,572 7s. 10d.

To assist this devoted people, several auxiliaries have been established, the chief of which is the "London Association in Aid of the Missions of the United Brethren," formed in 1817, by different denominations of Christians; some of the most active of whom are members of the church of England.

VI. In 1750 the "Book Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor" was formed by several benevolent persons, both Dissenters and Churchmen. The design of this society was to circulate, at the lowest possible price, Bibles, Hymn-books, catechisms, and tracts, and the standard writings of the most eminent authors of different denominations of Christians, excluding their peculiarities of church policy or modes of worship. The revered names of Doddridge and Hervey are found in the early annals of this society, as some of its most active and liberal supporters, affording a pledge of a still more extensive union between Churchmen and Dissenters in the work of God. The operations of this institution have been incalculably beneficial in circulating the best religious works among the poor, at the lowest prices; and although its labours have been partly superseded by the Bible, Tract, and Sunday-school Societies, it deserves universal support, as the means of diffusing sound scriptural knowledge, particularly to furnish libraries for the cottage, village, or vestry. Notwithstanding other societies, the issues of its valuable publications are greater now than at any former period of its existence. The

receipts of this society for the year ending December, 1829, as reported, were £1,653 9s. 1d. and from its commencement up to that period, £67,152 13s. 1d.

VII. In 1780, the “Naval and Military Bible Society” was formed. In that year, a military camp was pitched in Hyde Park, on account of the riots in London; when “a very few plain Christians,” affected with the profaneness of the soldiers, introduced the gospel among them by conversation and prayer, and suggested the propriety of an attempt to supply them with Bibles. The noble idea was cherished by a few pious officers, and the plan was framed to furnish the whole army and navy with the blessed Word of God. This society has progressively advanced from “the day of small things,” and has greatly increased. For several years it has included, in its benevolent regards, the seamen of the Merchant-service, with “all descriptions of watermen,” and the naval and military servants of the East India Company. From its commencement to the year 1830, there have been issued 244,477 copies of the Holy Scriptures, by the Naval and Military Bible Society!

VIII. In 1784, the “Methodist Missions” originated, when Mr. Wesley, at the Conference held at Leeds, declared his intention of sending Dr. Coke, and some other preachers, to America, after the independence of that country had been acknowledged. Mr. Wesley says, in a letter, dated Bristol, Sept. 10, 1784, “I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke, and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat, and Thomas Vasey, to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord’s Supper.” In 1787, Dr. Coke sailed for Nova Scotia with three missionaries, but they were driven by contrary winds among the West India islands, and landed at Antigua, Dec. 25. Here in 1760, Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, speaker of the House of Assembly, had laboured in preaching the gospel; and nearly twenty years after his death, in 1778, Mr. John Baxter, a shipwright, a Methodist from England, with much success. The devoted Moravians also had been the happy instruments of infinite benefits to the negroes; and the door was opened to the Methodists to prosecute their work of mercy. Dr. Coke took other labourers to St. Vincent,

St. Christopher's, St. Eustathius. In 1788, he extended the work to Barbadoes, Nevis, and Tortola; in 1789 to Jamaica; in 1790 to Grenada and Dominica. This zealous and laborious man continued to superintend and to direct the missionary affairs of the Methodists during thirty years, with great and progressive success, and on that account he crossed the Atlantic eighteen times! On a voyage to commence a mission in the island of Ceylon he died, in 1814. In 1817, the "Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society" was organized; and since that period its operations have increased, in many places with most evident tokens of the Divine benediction in the conversion of sinners to God. The number of missionaries as reported in 1830, employed under the direction of this society, is "about 220, exclusive of catechists, schoolmasters, and other subordinate agents." "The number of members in church-fellowship with them on the Foreign stations is 41,186." The returns of the number of children in the mission schools, are, including Ireland, and British North America, 26,440, and the receipts for the year amount to £50,017 18s. 8d.

IX. In 1785, the Sunday-school Society was formed, chiefly by the instrumentality of William Fox, Esq., a deacon of a Baptist church in London. This society has continued in operation to the present time; and has been the means of establishing and of assisting in the support of many Sunday-schools throughout Great Britain and our colonies. The number of schools assisted with grants of books, during the year 1830, is 440, containing 52,434 scholars; of which number 117 schools received grants in preceding years. From the commencement of the institution to the present year, the grand total of books gratuitously voted to Sunday-schools, is stated as 15,218 Bibles; 145,220 Testaments; and 898,331 Elementary Books and Lessons. The expenditure of this society during the past year, is £921 15s. 3d.

X. In 1792, the "Baptist Missionary Society" was formed, in consequence of Mr. (now Dr.) Carey proposing to the Northamptonshire Association of Baptist ministers, "whether it were not practicable and obligatory to attempt the conversion of the heathen?" Carey submitted a plan, which was accepted, and a society was formed, making a collection for this magnificent

object, amounting to £13 2s. 6d. Hindostan was judged a proper sphere for their attempt: but before any plan could be matured, they found a Baptist brother, Mr. John Thomas, a surgeon, lately returned from Calcutta to London, where he was labouring to raise a fund for the purpose of establishing a mission to India! This pious and devoted man had preached to the natives in Bengal; and John Thomas had the singular honour of being the first Englishman who made known the gospel to the benighted Hindoos. Thomas was engaged as a missionary by the Baptists: and Carey also offered himself to go to India. They sailed in 1793, in a Danish East Indiaman: but without funds. Thomas proposed to maintain himself by his profession; and Carey, by some occupation, till he could acquire the native language. Under difficulties extraordinary, with the assistance of Mr. Fountain, another missionary, they succeeded in translating the Scriptures into Bengalee. In 1799, they were reinforced by four more missionaries; but now they were refused permission to settle in the British territory. Carey and Fountain removed across the Ganges, sixteen miles from Calcutta, to Serampore, a Danish settlement; where, to his everlasting honour, the governor protected and encouraged these men of God. Ever since, this has been the principal station of the Baptists in India. Kristno, the first Hindoo convert to Christianity, was baptized, with Felix Carey, eldest son of the Doctor, in December, 1799, in the river Ganges, in the presence of a great concourse of people, Hindoos, Mohammedans, Europeans, and the Danish Governor, who shed tears at the affecting sight. In seven years from the date of Kristno's baptism, *one hundred and nine* intelligent converts submitted to that ceremony. In 1806, there were ten English missionaries at Serampore; but to detail the labours of these devoted men, and the successes with which God favoured them, would require many volumes. They had all things in common; and laboured for the common cause of the mission. Dr. Carey, by his learned labours at Calcutta, Dr. Marshman, by the school at Serampore, and Mr. Ward in the printing-office, have each contributed more than *one thousand pounds* per annum to the mission. The Baptists have many stations in different parts of India, the West Indies, the Burman empire,

and other places, where their labours have been honoured with many thousands of converts to the faith of Christ : but the most astonishing work of any body of Christians, in any age, is that of translating the Holy Scriptures. In 1806, they were printing the Scriptures at Serampore in *six languages*, and translating them into *six more*. In 1819, they were printing or translating the Word of God into *twenty-seven languages*, at Serampore or Calcutta !!

Slanders the most base, and attacks the most virulent, have been made by party, prejudiced, or unprincipled writers, upon these noble benefactors of mankind. They have been loaded with every vulgar or senseless epithet, even by educated Englishmen, who have called them Dissenters, Schismatics, Calvinists, fools, madmen, tinkers, low-born and low-bred mechanics : but their heaven-born benevolence is manifested in their works, upon which the God of glory has placed the seal of his approbation ; and their oriental learning has been proved to surpass that of any college in Christendom. Dr. Carey, especially, is admitted to be the first oriental scholar of our age. The calumnies of their enemies have been deservedly exposed by Mr. Fuller, secretary of the society, by Dr. Buchanan, Mr. Wilberforce, Lord Teignmouth, and Mr. W. Greenfield. See Baptists in Century xix.

XI. In 1795, the “London Missionary Society” was formed. This was a noble expression of Christian benevolence, in which were united several liberal-minded clergymen and the principal ministers of the Independent denomination, with several of the Scotch Secession, and of the Calvinistic Methodists. At their first annual meeting in May, 1796, it was resolved, that, “to prevent, if possible, any cause of future dissension, it is declared to be a fundamental principle of the Missionary Society, that its design is not presbyterianism, independency, episcopacy, or any other form of church order ; but the glorious gospel of the blessed God to the heathen ; leaving the converts to the Scriptures for church government.” This society originated in a great measure with Dr. Edward Williams, an Independent minister of Birmingham, publishing an address to his brethren in the ministry, in the Evangelical Magazine, in 1794, established in that year. By this address, the servants of God

were led to take measures for this institution. Dr. Williams, Dr. Haweis, Dr. Bogue, Mr. Eyre, Mr. Rowland Hill, Mr. Matthew Wilkes, were among its founders. The South Sea Islands were the station first chosen, and thirty missionaries were sent in the ship Duff. They were received by the natives of Tahiti with expressions of delight: but nearly twenty years they laboured with but little success; when, at once, the Divine blessing descended, and the whole population of several islands renounced idolatry, destroyed their idols, and embraced Christianity; multitudes of them in spirit and in truth. The work of God's grace continued to spread, and native teachers were raised up as missionaries to other and remote islands. To give a worthy account in this place is impossible; of the abolition of idolatry, infanticide, and other destructive abominations, as well as of the prevalence of religion among these once brutalized pagans. The African islands, but especially South Africa, has been marvellously blessed by means of the agents of this society; and the benefits of the British constitution have been extended to the enslaved Hottentots, and other nations of Africa, by the exertions of Dr. Philip. The East Indies have many successful labourers from this society; and an Anglo-Chinese college has been established by Dr. Morrison, Dr. Milne, and their colleagues at Malacea, destined to be an incalculable blessing to the East. China has been blessed by the ministry of Dr. Morrison; who, with the assistance of Dr. Milne, has translated the whole of the Holy Scriptures into Chinese, and compiled a Dictionary and Grammar of that difficult language. This has been considered the noblest work of any uninspired writer, or of any agent in the church of God since the days of the apostles. This translation of the Word of God opens the treasures of immortal life through Christ to nearly one-third of the population of the earth. Various other translations of the Scriptures have been made by the missionaries of this society, the particulars of which we cannot here detail. The stations of this society are 80, having 90 European missionaries, besides 21 printers, schoolmasters, and artisans, and many native ministers and teachers, amounting to nearly 400. The schools of the missionaries are numerous, containing about 20,000 scholars. But

few of the members of the church of England are now connected with the London Missionary Society ; yet its average annual income and expenditure is about forty thousand pounds. The receipts for the year ending April, 1831, were £40,590 3s. 6d.

XII. In 1796, the “Scottish Missionary Society” was formed ; and though its labours have not been so extensive as those of some others, it has sent forth many valuable missionaries. It has eleven missionaries ; one at Karass, in Russian Tartary, one at Astrachan, five in the East Indies, and four in the West Indies. The expenditure of this society for the year ending March, 1831, was £7,487 4s. 6d.

XIII. In 1706 was formed the “Village Itinerancy, or Evangelical Association for Spreading the Gospel in England.” This Society originated with the late Rev. John Eyre, M. A., a clergyman of the church of England, but a man of enlarged benevolence of heart, uniting with Dissenters in extending the work of God for the salvation of men. Some villages destitute of the gospel in Hants, Sussex, and Surrey, were the scenes of their first operations. In 1801, the late C. Townsend, Esq., joined this infant society, and in 1802 they conferred with the Rev. George Collison respecting a Theological Seminary for the preparation of pious young men for the ministry. Mr. Townsend died Feb. 1803, leaving £10,000 for the purposes of the institution, to Mr. Eyre as treasurer, who died the next month ; but the money being obtained, the college was commenced at Hackney, in October, 1803, under the direction of Mr. Collison, as tutor. More than one hundred young men of credible piety have been educated at this Academy, some of whom are highly esteemed ministers in the metropolis, and in different parts of the kingdom ; others have gone as missionaries to the heathen ; and some have been ordained to the ministry in the church of England. By occasional or annual grants from this society, many worthy pastors have been assisted ; and many villages in Great Britain have been blessed by its operations. Together with the interest of some funded property, this excellent institution is supported by voluntary contributions ; and in the year ending March, 1830, the expenditure was £2,346 11s. 6d.

XIV. In 1796 the “London Itinerant Society” was formed. This was instituted to supply the means of religious instruction to the destitute villages within fifteen miles of the metropolis. Many Sunday-schools have been established in neglected hamlets, and supplied with teachers and books by this society. Besides, the more gifted teachers have officiated as Scripture readers and preachers ; and numerous congregations, at present enjoying settled pastors, originated in the agency of this more humble society. In 1830, seventeen preaching stations were reported, as regularly supplied by this institution, whose receipts were £429, and its expenditure, in rents of schools, &c., about the same amount.

XV. In 1797 the “Baptist Home Missionary Society” was formed, to supply the destitute villages of Britain with the means of evangelical instruction ; and its labours have been great and prosperous. The society has progressively advanced. Its Report for 1830 states, that the Baptist Home Missionary Society “supports, in a great degree, thirty-six missionaries, and it extends aid to more than fifty itinerant and village preachers, whose voices are heard from the principality of Wales to the opposite shore ; and from the Land’s End almost to the Orkneys.” The same Report mentions two hundred and thirty-six Sunday-schools supported on the Home Missionary stations of this society. The expenditure of this society, in its operations for the year ending May, 1830, was £1,954 15s. 9d.

XVI. In 1799 the “Religious Tract Society” was instituted. Previously, some worthy efforts had been made by Mrs. Hannah More and a few friends, and their Cheap Repository Tracts had been brought into extensive circulation. The Rev. George Burder and the Rev. Samuel Greatheed had also published their “Village Tracts,” by which the saving doctrines of the gospel had been happily communicated to many. But in May 17, 1799, the Rev. Joseph Hughes, A. M., a Baptist minister of London, and four lay gentlemen, were appointed at a public meeting to carry into effect the object of the friends present. The Religious Tract Society thus formed includes members of the church of England, as well as Dissenters, and its *fundamental principle*, to which it has laboured sacredly to adhere, is contained in their first tract, written by Dr. Bogue,

an Independent minister, in which they profess that their publications should "consist of pure truth." This, flowing from the sacred fountain of the New Testament, should run from beginning to end; uncontaminated with error, undisturbed with human systems; clear as crystal, like the water of life. "By way of explanation," the committee add, "that by pure truth, when not expresssed in the words of Scripture, they refer to those evangelical principles of the Reformation, in which Luther, Calvin, and Cranmer agreed. On this large portion of ground, which the Churchman, the Dissenter, and the foreigner jointly occupy, they conceive that *Christian union* may be established and strengthened; *Christian affection* excited and cherished; and *Christian zeal* concentrated and rendered proportionally effective. Every year the operations of this society have increased: but to do justice to its principles, proceedings, and publications, is impossible. Talents of the highest order have been engaged in preparing its varied works, which are adapted for all ages, from the lisping infant to the mature believer and the dying saint, illustrative of the gospel, and demonstrative of its divinity. Their numerous publications for the young—their antidotes to infidelity—their series of Christian Biography—Church History, Works of the Reformers, Commentary on the Bible, and Monthly Magazines, are above all praise. And as many of its publications have been translated into various languages of the East, as well as of Europe, and widely circulated, eternity alone can develope the abundance and richness of its fruits. The missionaries of the various societies receive the most valuable and seasonable help from this great institution. The receipts of the Tract Society, for the year ending May, 1830, were £25,062 16s. 4d.; and the number of publications issued, more than *ten millions*. The total circulation of the society, at home and abroad, since its commencement, exceeds *one hundred and forty millions* of its publications!

XVII. In 1800 the "Church Missionary Society" commenced. Aroused by witnessing the active zeal of other denominations of Christians, several pious Churchmen united to form this institution, for the extension of the gospel under the forms of the church of England. This society manifested but little zeal

for several years ; and, being discountenanced by the prelates and the dignitaries of the church, its labours were inconsiderable. Two missionaries were at length obtained from Germany, and they departed from England to Western Africa, in March, 1804. Three more were sent forth in 1806. The Soosoo country and the Bulломshore, in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone, were the first stations of this society ; but both were afterwards abandoned, and the mission established at Sierra Leone. In 1809, two missionaries were sent to New Zealand, at the recommendation of Mr. Marsden, chaplain of New South Wales. Before 1811 the efforts of this society had been exceedingly inefficient ; but in that year, the Rev. Melville Horne, late chaplain to the colony of Sierra Leone, preached the annual sermon before the society, from which it appears, that not one Englishman had engaged in the work. He says, “Sorry am I to say that the clergy, and the clergy alone, decline the cross ! When not one clergyman will arise in the cause of the Redeemer, what is to be said ? Have you, my honoured brethren, in Africa, or in the East, one English clergyman who serves as a missionary ?” Having then directed his hearers to contemplate the zeal of the Dissenters, he appeals to them,—“Have Carey and the Baptists had more forgiven than we, that they should love more ? Have the fervent Methodists and patient Moravians been extortionate publicans, that they should expend their all in a cause which we decline ? Have our Independent brethren persecuted the church, that they should be now much more zealous in propagating the faith which they once destroyed ?” The appeal was not in vain ; the Church Missionary Society has, since that period, been making considerable progress ; having not only German agents, but many Englishmen, who receive ordination from the bishop of London, as his diocese is regarded as extending to most of our foreign colonies. Much attention has been directed by this society to schools in India ; where Messee, a converted Mahomedan, began scriptural instruction, under the direction of Mr. Cowie, a chaplain of Calcutta, in 1812. In 1814, two German missionaries were sent from England to Madras, and from that period others have been sent successively to various places. The schools established by this

society, have engaged the greater degree of the attention of its agents ; and they have been of incalculable benefit to the rising generation. In their labours, this society has found worthy coadjutors in some of the chaplains of the East India Company, and in some others : yet still, the cumbrous machinery of the church of England is observed to be ill adapted to the missionary cause ; and the successes of this society have not been considered equal to what might have been expected from its expenditure. What is deeply regretted in this society, even by many of its most pious friends and ministers, is, its uncharitable sectarianism ; for though its secretaries meet the secretaries of the missionary societies conducted by the Dissenters, for the purposes of conference and prayer, monthly, it is complained, that in their general proceedings, they studiously avoid any allusions to the extensive labours of others, and that the like care is observed to abstain from recognising the marvellous successes with which they have been honoured by the blessing and Spirit of God. It is also regretted, that they carry this exclusive policy so far, as not to allow the most eminent agent of the other missionary societies to take any part in their public meetings ! It is reported that this unlovely spirit is carried, in a great degree, to foreign countries ; and we see that even the late devoted bishop Heber, when he arrived in India, as he has recorded in his Journals, required the church of England missionaries to relinquish their social prayer-meetings, which had been held with the missionaries of other societies ! In the year ending March, 1831, the Church Missionary Society had fifty-six stations in West Africa, the Mediterranean, India, Australasia, West Indies, and North-West America ; thirty-seven English, seventeen Lutheran, and four native ordained clergymen ; thirty-eight European, and 453 native schoolmasters ; 320 schools, and 15,791 scholars. The expenditure for the year was £44,266 13s. 9d. ; the receipts, £52,053 10s.

XVIII. In 1803, the “Sunday School Union” was formed ; the design of which is to stimulate Sunday-school teachers to greater exertions ; to improve the methods of tuition ; to increase the number of Sunday-schools ; to furnish suitable books and stationery at the lowest prices ; and to correspond with

ministers and others, at home and abroad, for the purpose of promoting the establishment of Sunday-schools, and local Sunday-school Unions. Both the foreign and home success of this society shows that it has richly received the Divine blessing. In their Report of 1830 it is stated, there were reported to the Union 7,085 schools ; 79,753 teachers ; 805,456 Sunday scholars, in Great Britain. But this is believed to be not much more than half of the schools and scholars in the kingdom, without including Ireland. The trade account of the society for the year 1830, was £6,089 11s. 9d., and the benevolent fund account, £985 17s. 11d.

XIX. In 1804, the “British and Foreign Bible Society” was instituted. This wondrous society originated in the endeavours of the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, the principal leader of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, to supply his countrymen with the Holy Scriptures in their native language. The subject being mentioned at a committee-meeting of the Religious Tract Society, its secretary, the Rev. Mr. Hughes, suggested the idea of a general society for supplying the whole world with Bibles ! The friends present approving the proposition, measures were taken to call a public meeting, which, on the 7th of March, 1804, was held at the London Tavern, consisting of about three hundred persons of different denominations, including some worthy Quakers. For the purpose of carrying their resolutions into effect, it was deemed advisable to seek the patronage of some person of rank. Dr. Porteus, then bishop of London, yielded to the application ; gave his cordial sanction ; and recommended lord Teignmouth as president ; an office which that distinguished nobleman has ever since filled with honour. Several other prelates gave their names, which were enrolled on the list of presidents. The Rev. Joseph

Hughes, M.A., a Baptist minister, and its original projector ; the Rev. Josiah Pratt, A.M., of the church of England ; and the Rev. Charles F. A. Steinkopff, D.D., minister of the Lutheran chapel in London, were appointed secretaries. The fundamental law of the society declares its title as given above ; and, also, that its object is exclusively to promote the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, both at home and abroad ; and further, that the copies circulated in the

United Kingdom, in the English language, shall be those only of the authorized version. The constitution of this society admits of the co-operation of all persons who are disposed to concur in its support; and it is ordained that the proceedings of this society shall be conducted by a committee, consisting of thirty-six laymen, six of whom shall be foreigners residing in London and its vicinity; half of the remainder members of the church of England, and the other half members of other denominations of Christians. The presidents, and all clergymen and dissenting ministers, subscribing to the society, may vote at the meetings of the committee. The British and Foreign Bible Society has had many enemies; especially among the high church clergy of the establishment, and not more than about a sixth part of its prelates and clergy have, at any time, been reckoned among its friends. But to detail its history would require volumes. It has been the means of originating similar institutions in most parts of the world in which the Bible is believed, conveying immortal blessings to all nations. Either in England or in foreign countries, directly at the expense of the society, or indirectly by grants to societies abroad or to individuals, this astonishing institution has reprinted the Holy Scriptures in forty-four languages; in five languages it has printed retranslations of the Scriptures: in seventy-two languages and dialects in which they never had previously been printed; and in thirty-two new translations commenced or completed; making a total of one hundred and fifty-three different languages and dialects! It had issued, up to March, 1831, more than seven millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures; and had expended the sum of £1,779,993 5s. 5d. Besides which, nearly five millions of copies of Bibles and Testaments had been issued by the kindred societies in Europe, Asia, and America.

XX. In 1805 the "British and Foreign School Society" was instituted. This most noble institution, the design of which is the "education of the labouring and manufacturing classes of society of every religious persuasion," arose out of the zealous exertions of Joseph Lancaster, an ingenious schoolmaster of London, and who is generally considered the inventor of the system of *mutual instruction*. His own exertions were surpris-

ing ; and he soon enjoyed the patronage of the king, and of the royal dukes of Kent and Sussex. A society was formed in 1805, and a noble building for a model school was erected in Southwark, and schools were soon established in different parts of the kingdom upon the same plan. It is a law of this society, that the schools in connexion with it "shall be open to the children of parents of all denominations : the lessons for reading shall consist of extracts from the Holy Scriptures ; no catechism or peculiar religious tenets shall be taught in the schools, but every child shall be enjoined to attend regularly the place of worship to which its parents belong." As no preference was given to the peculiarities of the church of England, and no provision made for the use of its catechism, prejudices and opposition were excited, by certain intolerant alarmists of the church of England. It was said to be an engine for the multiplication of Dissenters : but this prejudice was overruled for good, as Churchmen were roused to take part in the education of the poor, by the formation of national schools. These were therefore established in very many parishes through the kingdom, in which it is reported, there are now about 280,000 scholars taught on a similar plan, somewhat modified by Dr. Bell, recently returned from Madras. In these schools the church catechism is used.

The Report of the British and Foreign School Society, for the year ending May, 1831, appears to be one of the most interesting documents of the kind ever published ; exhibiting its various branch operations, not only in England and the colonies of Great Britain, but in many States of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and the Islands of the Great South Sea, with the general state of education in those countries. From this society have originated, not only the National Schools, but many others in different parts of the world, among which we must mention the "Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland," called the Dublin "Kildare-Street Society," which had, in 1829, 1553 schools on its list, containing 124,449 scholars. This society has received a grant of money annually from Parliament. The Irish Report states also,—"The total number of schools assisted from your funds during the past year, including the new

schools, is 1,222 ; the gross amount of the grants is £6,830 9s. 6½d., exclusive of gratuities to deserving teachers, and of the expense of the training department. The model schools continue in a very satisfactory state : the total number of both sexes, which received instruction during the past year, was 1,546 ; since their commencement, 12,423. The total number of teachers who have been trained in these schools, since their first opening, (that for masters in 1813, for mistresses in 1824,) to January 5, 1830, is,—Males, 1,610,—Females, 363 ; making a total of 1,973 teachers attached to schools in all parts of Ireland."

In the central schools of the society in London, there are regularly above 500 boys on the books, and 18,850 have been received for instruction. There are 300 girls kept on the books, and 9,180 have been received since the commencement :—total, 28,000. The various schools in London, now in connexion with this society, contain about 15,000 scholars. During the year ending May, 1831, fifty-eight candidates, either for boys' or girls' schools, have been received ; thirty-seven of whom have been boarded and instructed, wholly or in part, at the expense of the Institution ; thirty-nine have been placed over schools, three have sailed for foreign stations, and sixteen remain on the list. Five missionaries have also attended to learn the system, previous to their setting out for their respective destinations. His majesty, William IV., is patron of this society, with an annual subscription of £100, to mark his sense of its importance. Its expenditure, during the past year, was £3,222 18s. 7d., exclusive of £770 14s. 5d. specially appropriated to promote scriptural education in Greece. Prejudice has misrepresented this great society, but it seems destined to advance scriptural education throughout the whole world.

XXI. In 1806 the "London Hibernian Society" was instituted. This is an invaluable institution, the design of which is the scriptural education of the poor in Ireland, by day, Sunday, and adult schools, and Scripture readers. The year ending May, 1831, presented returns of schools in thirty different counties in Ireland, in number 1,595 ; in which there were enrolled 85,755 scholars. The average attendance is about

two-thirds of the whole, and about one-half of them are Roman Catholics. “The only books supplied by the society are two Spelling-books, and the Holy Scriptures of the authorized version, in English; and an Irish Spelling-book, and the Holy Scriptures of bishop Bedell’s and archbishop Daniel’s version, in Irish. All the scholars, of sufficient age, read and commit to memory the Holy Scriptures. The scholars are inspected publicly once a quarter, and the teachers are paid only for those scholars who, on inspection, exhibit the required proficiency. The gross disbursements of last year were £8,435:—the number of scholars may be taken at 70,000: this gives 2*s.* 5*d.* per head, without allowing any thing for Scripture readers, salaries of agents, &c. If the Sunday scholars, adult scholars, Irish classes, &c., are left out of the account, and the whole sum supposed to be expended on 53,452 day scholars, it would give 3*s.* each scholar. The real average expense to the society of each scholar is therefore much less than *three shillings per annum!*” This society is generously supplied with the Scriptures by grants from the Bible Society. The Report of 1831 states, “The committee are again called upon to acknowledge the renewed liberality of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which, in addition to the munificent grant, announced at your last meeting, of ten thousand English Bibles, and twenty thousand Testaments, has since cheerfully placed at your disposal one thousand Irish Testaments !

XXII. In 1808, the “Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews” was formed. It was instituted by several devoted ministers and private Christians of different denominations, under the patronage of the duke of Kent. Its labours were manifestly sanctioned by the God of Abraham, in blessing the invitations to the Hebrews to behold Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. Schools were established in Spital-fields, London, and the Jews’ Chapel was opened in that vicinity. In 1813, the Episcopal Chapel was erected in Bethnal Green, attached to which various other buildings were raised, for the more convenient prosecution of the desired objects. But the society being heavily in debt, several affluent Churchmen engaged to take the whole responsibility, if the Dissenters would relinquish their claims upon a share of its direction; to

which they consented. The society is now supported principally by members of the church of England, having two of the bishops for patrons. The report of the year ending March, 1831, states, “There are at present in the schools at Bethnal Green thirty-boys and thirty-eight girls.” They have a missionary seminary, in which “there have been five students during the past year. The present number of missionaries in immediate connexion with the society is thirty, besides three, who are engaged in India under the inspection of the Madras committee. Of these ten are of the Jewish nation. There are, also, five other individuals at present engaged as teachers in the Jewish schools in the Grand Duchy of Posen; making a total of thirty-eight missionary agents engaged in promoting the objects of this society.” The principal fields of missionary labour, besides England, are various parts of Europe, where Jews are numerous. The total receipts of this society during the past year were £14,144 7s. 9d. But it has been liberally assisted by grants of Hebrew Bibles and Testaments from the British and Foreign Bible Society.

XXIII. In 1812 the “Prayer Book and Homily Society” was formed. “The sole object of which is the distribution of the authorised formularies of the church of England, both at home and abroad, in English and in foreign languages.” The whole or parts of these formularies have been translated into several languages, and there is reason to believe that their circulation has been accompanied with the Divine blessing. The Report for the year ending May, 1830, states, “It is no small testimony to the value of our church service, that the Chinese, Malay, and Indo-Portuguese translations, were made by individuals who conscientiously dissent from us. The number of bound Prayer Books and Homilies issued during the past year was 9,585; and of Tracts 140,208. The whole number of books circulated by the society from the first, is—of Prayer Books 177,215; of its Tracts, 1,450,555.” The expenditure of the past year was £2,285 8s. 9d.

XXIV. In 1814 the “Irish Evangelical Society” was formed in London. The design of it is declared to be “to promote the preaching of the gospel in Ireland, by maintaining an Evangelical Academy for the education of native and other

students, and by assisting pastors and itinerant preachers in the various and important labours of the Christian ministry. The fundamental principle of this society is declared to be, that "as its sole desire is to enlarge the kingdom of our Saviour, it will not direct its exertions to the exaltation of sects, or the establishment of parties; but will leave to the congregations that may be collected, the choice of their own mode of worship, and the formation of their own churches." This society has been the means of extensive and incalculable good, in educating pious young men for the ministry, and in supporting them while labouring to gather churches in different parts of the country. The Report of the year ending May, 1831, states, "the society's agents are fifty-seven; nine pastors of churches, who perform itinerant services; fifteen ministers, entirely supported by the funds of the society, and constantly engaged in its service; eleven missionaries, in the English or Irish language, who travel through extensive districts; and twenty-two scripture readers and expositors, chiefly engaged in a course of domiciliary Christian instruction. The agents last named are chiefly employed in connexion with the former, to whom they prove the most valuable auxiliaries." The expenditure of the past year was £3,759 6s. 5d. The society has a committee of management in Dublin.

XXV. In 1814 the "Baptist Irish Society" was instituted, for promoting the gospel in Ireland, by employing itinerants, establishing schools, and distributing Bibles and Tracts, either gratuitously or at reduced prices. Great success has attended the operations of this society up to this period, and the Report of the year ending May, 1831, states, "that in the evening-schools for adults, more than seven hundred men have, during the past winter, been taught to read the Scriptures in Irish or English. The number of scholars now amounts to upwards of 8,000. There are six ministers in Ireland in the service of the society, and during the year the agents of the society have distributed 1,630 English and Irish Bibles and Testaments, besides first and second spelling-books in the schools, amounting to 4,899 copies. The expenditure of the year was £2,866 17s. 11d.

XXVI. In 1816 the "Irish Society" was formed, the design

of which is to instruct the native Irish, who still use their vernacular language, how to employ it as the means for obtaining an accurate knowledge of English; and for this end, as also for their amelioration, to distribute among them the Irish version of the Scriptures by archbishop Daniel and bishop Bedell, the Irish Prayer-book where acceptable, and such other books as may be necessary for school-books."

XXVI. In 1818 the "Continental Society" was formed, the object of which is stated to be, "to assist local native ministers in preaching the gospel, and in distributing Bibles, Testaments, and religious publications over the continent of Europe; but without the design of establishing any distinct sect or party. That the acknowledgment of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity be indispensable to constitute a member of this Society; and that governors, and clergymen, and dissenting ministers, who are members of this Society, be entitled to attend and vote at all meetings of the committee." There is difficulty in exhibiting a statement of the operations of the Continental Society, because a measure of secrecy is required, on account of the jealousy of the European governments. Its agency, however, is considerable, and its expenditure in the year ending April, 1831, was £2,308 19s. 7d.

XVIII. In 1818, the "Port of London Society" was formed; and with it was united, in 1827, the "Bethel Union." The design of these societies was for "Promoting Religion among British and Foreign Seamen." This society appears, from its Report for the year ending April, 1831, to employ one missionary and four ministers, as its principal agents. It has a Floating Chapel on the river Thames; in which ministers of different denominations preach gratuitously in connection with the Society's ministers. Bethel meetings for prayer are held on board those vessels in the river whose captains are pious, or inclined to sanction the religious improvement of their men. One of the agents writes, "I frequently behold five, six, and even seven lanterns, the humble but significant symbols for divine worship;" and at these meetings, chiefly in the vessels of colliers, he says, "Four five, six, and more of the sailors engage in prayer." Small libraries are furnished to many ships; a Day-school for the children of watermen, an Orphan Asylum, in which fifty-three children are supported and educated, and the *Sailors' Magazine*,

are connected with this Society, which has been the means of originating other similar societies at our principal ports, and in America. The expenditure of this Society for the year was £816 17s. 8d.

XXIX. In 1819, the “Home Missionary Society” was instituted. Its design is the “Evangelization of the unenlightened Inhabitants of the Towns and Villages of Great Britain, by preaching the Gospel, the Distribution of Religious Tracts, and the establishment of prayer-meetings and Sunday-schools, with every other scriptural method for the accomplishment of this important object.” The necessity for the Home Missionary Society is evident to every intelligent Christian, and amply proved by the remarkable documents in its Reports, and from the clerical testimonies in our own review of England in the nineteenth century. To detail the beneficial operations of this society is altogether impossible in this place, but it appears to have the strongest claims upon the patriots of Britain. It has received the generous support of some pious members of the church of England, and from several of the evangelical clergy. The Report for the year ending March, 1831, states, “the society employs thirty-five missionaries; in addition to whom there are about twenty pastors and stated ministers, who devote a portion of their time to the objects of this society. There are, in all, sixty agents, who employ every practicable mode of communicating religious instruction, by schools, by the distribution of tracts, and by regular preaching. They have 200 villages, and not fewer than 4,000 children under their care, in a population of nearly 200,000 souls. Appeals the most affecting are continually being made from destitute hamlets of our country for evangelical labourers; by which the society has been induced to exceed their funds. The treasurer has received during the past year £4,909 4s. and paid £4,900; but the society is still indebted, not less than £700. God has graciously blessed the operations of the Home Missionary Society, so that many flourishing churches have been formed, some of whom support their own pastors without any pecuniary aid from the society; but its claims upon the liberality of British Christian patriots are urgent and imperative, to assist in recovering our peasantry from that

state of ignorance and crime, which is fearfully developed by our county goals, and prisons, and special commissions.

XXX. In 1822, the "Irish Society of London" was formed, as an auxiliary to the Irish Society of Dublin; besides which, some attention has been paid to the native Irish residing in London; and in June, 1830, a public meeting was held to establish the Irish Society's *Church Fund*. The receipts of this society for the year ending April, 1830, were £1,532. 5s. 2d.

XXXI. In 1823, the "Ladies' Hibernian Female School Society" commenced. Scriptural instruction is the course pursued by this society; and its benefits have been remarkably great, not only in sowing the seed of God's Word, but in the saving conversion of some to the knowledge and faith of Christ. The Report for the year 1831 states, "the number of children in the schools is 11,470, of which there is about an equal number of Roman Catholics and Protestants." The expenditure of the society for that year was £2,445 9s.

XXXII. In 1825, the "Christian Instruction Society" was formed. It originated with some benevolent dissenting ministers in London, who deeply felt the degradation of thousands of its inhabitants. On a survey it was found, that there were only four hundred places of worship in the metropolis, half of which belong to the Dissenters; and that supposing they were attended by an average of one thousand persons each, which was far from being the fact, yet even then there would be about a million of the inhabitants without the means of grace! A society therefore was formed by the principal Dissenters to carry forward an organized system of visiting the lanes and courts and wretched districts of the metropolis, to establish prayer-meetings, Sunday-schools, and preaching-places; and especially to distribute religious tracts, by weekly loans. Many of the congregations in London have adopted the plans of this society, and the most signal tokens of the Divine blessing have attended these labours of love and visits of mercy. The Report for the year ending May, 1831, states, that "at the present time there are sixty-five associations, which engage the benevolent attention of 1,173 gratuitous visitors, who have, during the past year, visited 31,591 families. So that by your voluntary agency alone, religious tracts and books are

now placed within the reach of at least 150,000 individuals.” “Immediately connected with the numerous associations are to be found ninety-three stations for reading the Scriptures and prayer.” This society employs a city missionary, whose labours have been incalculably beneficial. Many of the most eminent ministers in the metropolis have co-operated in outdoor preaching, in tents, and in lectures to mechanics on the most important subjects. Valuable tracts, &c., are published by this society, whose plans have been adopted in many cities and towns both in England and Ireland. Its expenditure for the year was £1,487 10s. 11d.

XXXIII. In 1828, was formed, “the British Society for Promoting the Religious Principles of the Reformation.” This society has a special regard to the prevalence of the Roman Catholic profession in England and Ireland; and it proposes by education, Scripture readers, miscellaneous publications, and public or local discussions, to excite public interest in the controversy, to diffuse information on the subject, and thus to destroy the influence of the priests, and convert the Catholic population to the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. The receipts of the society for 1830, were £2,984.

CHAPTER III.

REFLECTIONS.

REVIEWING the “History of the church of God through all Ages,” we have been furnished with the most profitable lessons of instruction. Scenes of human guilt, and consequent misery, have constrained us to deplore the apostacy and depravity of our race. While the sovereign dispensations of the Divine compassion to man, manifested through succeeding generations, have led us to adore “the exceeding riches of his grace” by a Mediator, and to admire the wondrous provisions for salvation, that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, evangelists, martyrs, and confessors, have formed “a great cloud of witnesses” for God to us, unitedly bearing their testimony, in life and death, to the saving efficacy, and the benevolent tendency, of “the glorious gospel of the blessed God.”

Inspired prophecy has pourtrayed before us the character of genuine piety in the church of God, and directed us to anticipate the awful day of decision. “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.” Without waiting for that fearful period, “Church History assists us to discriminate in this life, by their different fruits; and as an apostle has decided, in this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil.” Active, universal charity, and sympathizing benevolence to their miserable fellow-creatures, embracing their interests in the present and future life, have been exhibited only by the true disciples of Christ, or by those who have assumed the profession of his holy name; and out of more than *three hundred* public and private institutions of England’s metropolis, formed to visit the sick, and clothe the naked, to protect the fatherless, and befriend the widow, to relieve the distressed, suffering under various forms of woe, and especially to direct the desponding, guilty spirit to the asylum of Divine mercy, and the bliss of immortality, not a single institution has been formed by the boasting sons of infidelity and irreligion. They are the venerable monuments sacred to real piety or to assumed Christianity.

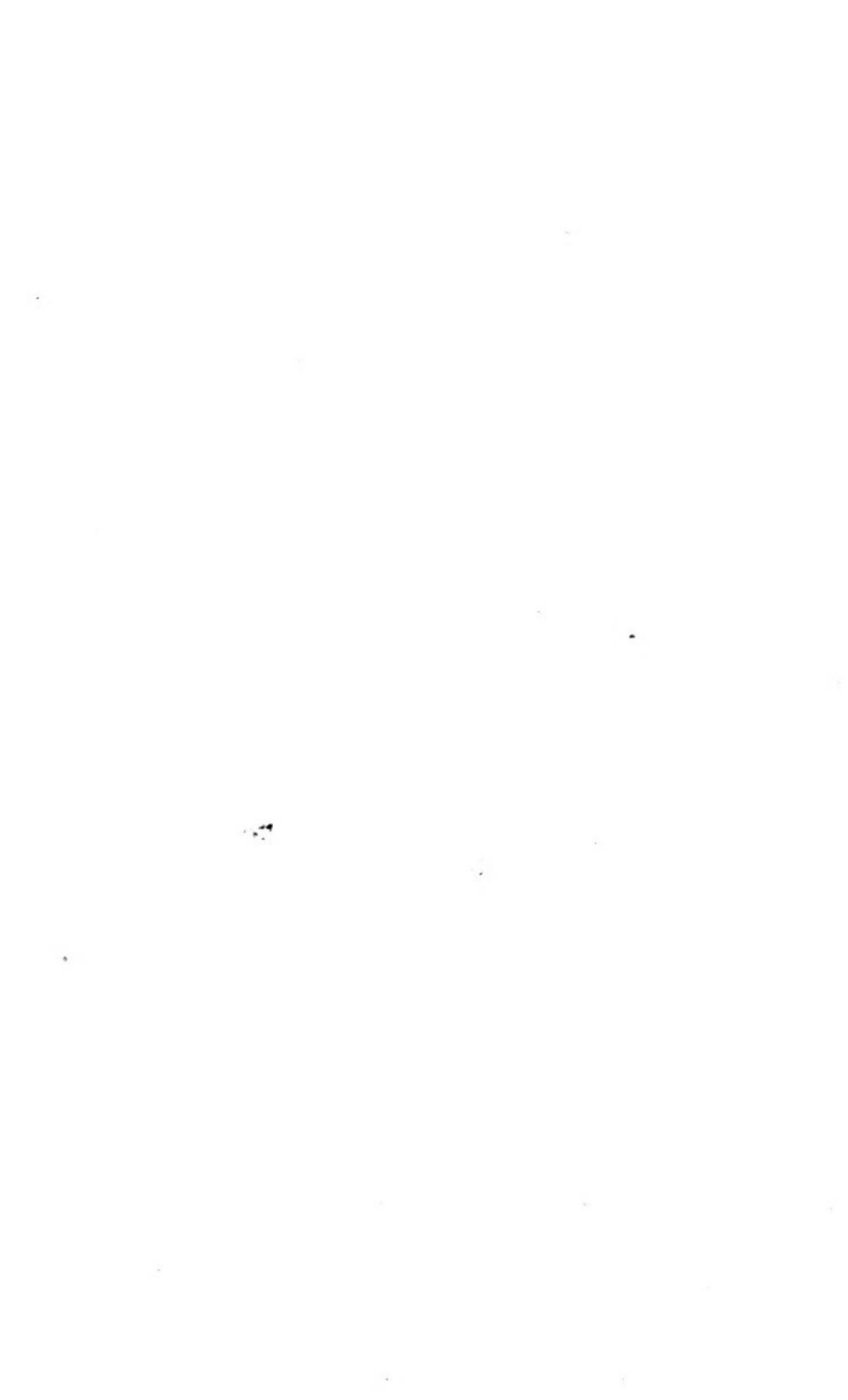
“Lights in the world,” and “salt in the earth,” the members of the church of Christ have appeared, through all ages, to illuminate and bless mankind; and their “works of faith and labours of love,” will continue in operation, till “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Contemplating the future, we must consider the vast machinery which a gracious providence has brought into motion. Sunday-schools, nurseries for the church of God, are established through the British empire, and the United States of America; and, with the scriptural plans of the British and Foreign School Society, they are becoming common, in nations

through every quarter of the globe, the most admirable means of advancing the cause of God and his truth. Bible Societies are preparing, by the multiplication of copies of the Holy Scriptures, to supply the reading population in all nations. The British University Printing establishments possess the means of producing at the rate of about *two copies of the Bible every minute!* and the American Bible Society, with its *sixteen steam presses*, is said to be capable of producing at the rate of more than *four copies of the Bible every minute!!* To anticipate the ardent wishes of awakened immortals in every nation, God has graciously raised up his servants among the evangelical missionaries, to translate the Holy Scriptures into all the languages of the earth; of which more than a *hundred and fifty* are now sanctified with the Divine Revelation, that every man may soon both hear and read in his own tongue in which he was born, the wondrous works of God! Religious Tract Societies are vigorously in operation; publishing and circulating, by millions, their pure works, to excite the multitude to read their scriptural lessons of saving doctrine. Members of the church of God, among all denominations, are now deeply impressed with their obligations to bless their fellow-men. Missionary Societies are sending forth their devoted messengers of mercy to call the ignorant, superstitious, and degraded heathen population to believe the gospel, and live for ever through Jesus Christ; and God is graciously crowning the labours of his servants.

Scriptural truth is more fully recognised; its decisions are becoming paramount; and even zealous members of venerable hierarchies, are dissenting from their imposed Creeds, and adopting, as their maxim, the motto which has been held sacred, and sealed by the blood of the venerable company of confessors, "the noble army of martyrs, and the goodly fellowship of the prophets," *The Bible—the whole Bible—and nothing but the Bible.*

"GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, AND BLESS US; AND CAUSE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON US. THAT THY WAY MAY BE KNOWN UPON EARTH, THY SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS."
(Psalm lxvii. 1, 2.)



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